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GameWEEK EVERY Week

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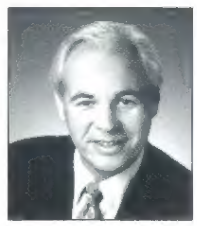

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# Dreamcast Strategy Document Reveals Marketing Nuances

*By Andy Eddy*

*GameWEEK* has exclusively obtained an internal strategy report that reveals some of Sega's plans for how it will approach the all-important launch of its Dreamcast game system in North America.

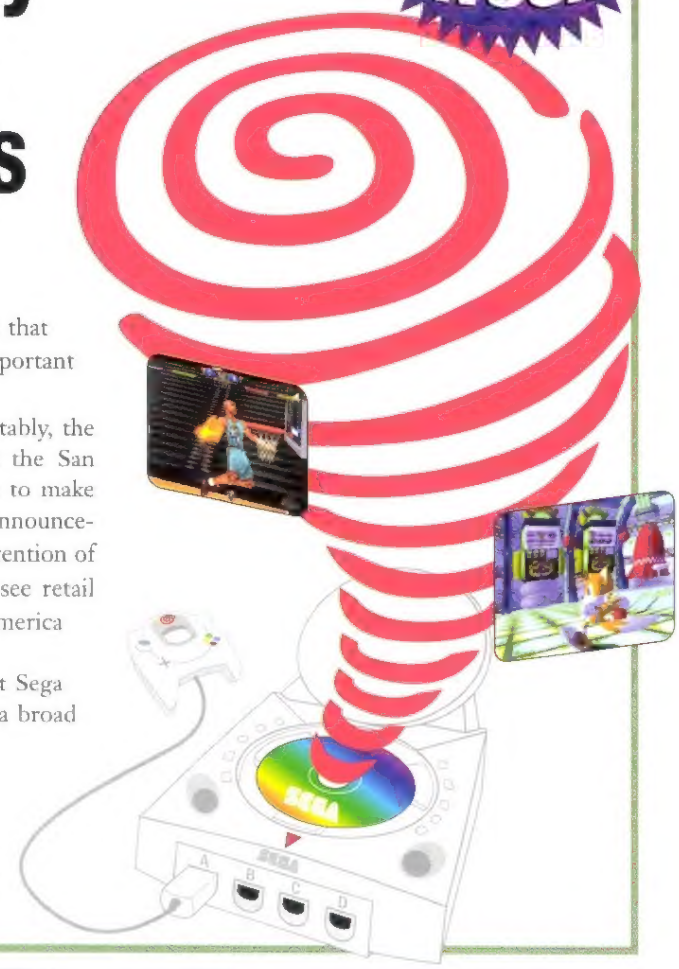
With the industry well aware of Sega's previous rocky history—notably, the lack of success with its Saturn system—there's an expectation that the San Francisco-based company will have to pull out all the stops in order to make Dreamcast a success and perhaps even to survive. Though the recent announcements by Sony about its "next-generation PlayStation" captured the attention of media, developers and the public alike, the system isn't expected to see retail shelves until this fall, and then only in Japan; the release into North America isn't expected for more than a year.

Indeed, Dreamcast has time on its side—though it's something that Sega has to take advantage of, by providing a solid library of software and a broad marketing strategy to drive the hardware in retail.

### STRATEGIC BREAKDOWN

In fact, it would seem that Sega has a well-thought-out plan, and the company can succeed if it follows most of the specifications it has set

*(continued on page 12)*



# GT Takes Consumers to Driving School

*By Ben Rinaldi*

Racing/vehicular combat games are no stranger to today's crowed games market and certainly aren't lacking on PlayStation and PC. In order to be successful in this type of over-saturated genre, a game needs to hook consumers with completely

*(continued on page 3)*

# MechWarrior 3 Rolls Closer to Launch

*By Jason R. Rich*

As MicroProse/Hasbro Interactive prepares to release MechWarrior 3 for PC CD-ROM on June 1. The company plans to capitalize fully on the worldwide popularity of the BattleTech and MechWarrior franchises that have been in existence for over 15 years.

BattleTech started off as a role-playing board game created by Jordan Weissman and L. Ross Babcock III, the founders of FASA Corporation. Their company has successfully licensed its games for novels, computer games, virtual reality games, miniatures, toys, a television series, a card game, comic books and other products based on the BattleTech and MechWarrior universe.

It was in 1995 that Activision released *MechWarrior 2* for the PC. To date, the original PC title has been followed by a

**MechWarrior 3**

series of expansion packs and sequels, and it continues to be one of the best-selling action/strategy combat simulation games in history, generating over $200 million in worldwide sales. Including retail and OEM sales of the PC-based *MechWarrior 2* and *NetMech* games, over seven million

*(continued on page 10)*

# DIRECTOR'S CUT

GRAND THEFT AUTO + GTA: LONDON 1969*

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## THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

Grand Theft Auto + GTA: London 1969

* **GTA: London 1969 is an add-on disc for Grand Theft Auto.**

***"Makes Boyz N the Hood seem like an After School Disney Special" -CNN***

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R ROCKSTAR

# Fox Interactive Lands a Sweet Deal with Croc 2

## *Prima strategy guide will also follow*

*By Karen Jones*

Talk about a double-dip. Not only can PlayStation gamers rock around the Croc this summer, with the release of Fox Interactive's *Croc 2* (SRP $44.98), but also they can satisfy their sweet tooth at the same time. Fox has partnered with Nabisco LifeSavers Company in a special Gummi Savers candy promotion that showcases *Croc 2* on 6.5 million packages of Gummi Savers and features the candy in the game. In case that wasn't enough, there's a sweepstake, beginning on June 1, offering a grand prize trip to Australia and 50 PlayStation giveaways.

Fans shouldn't be worried that the Gummi Savers incorporated into the game are just "eye candy," or resemble an ongoing commercial, according to Scott Marcus, VP of worldwide promotions and strategic alliances for Fox. He assures *GameWEEK* that they are used as real powerups and without a neon sign (they are identified in the manual and on a small icon in the interface). Besides, says Marcus, they make perfect sense because "The world of Croc is a fun, colorful world, and Gummi Savers are fun and colorful. In the first *Croc*, special crystals protected you, in *Croc 2*, you collect crystals to buy Gummi Savers to continue the quest and finish the game."

Other promotions surrounding the little crocodile (1.5 million units sold of the original *Croc*, and counting) will feature a $2 million television advertising campaign, online advertising including Nabisco's popular www.candystand.com, a Prima Publishing strategy guide and "aggressive" retail support with shelf talkers, posters, standees, etc. *Croc 2* will also be packed into upcoming PlayStation hardware bundles. *GW*

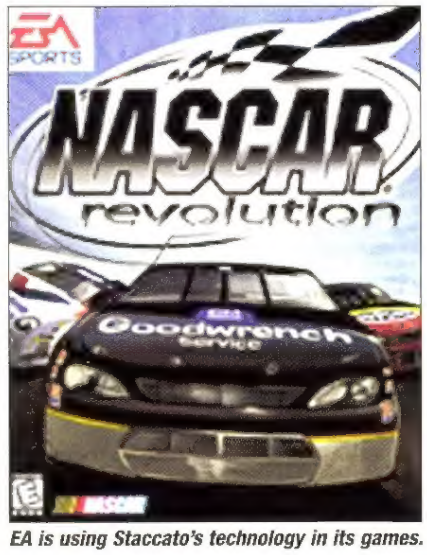
# Staccato's Audio Revolution

*By Ben Rinaldi*

With the advent of new technologies like Voodoo 3 and Intel's Pentium III, graphics in computer games have improved leaps and bounds over what existed only a few short years ago. While visuals have received the majority of attention from game designers, the equally important, but sometimes neglected, audio experience often takes a back seat in a game's development cycle. The obvious reasons are the high cost and excessive time consumption associated with current sound techniques.

Staccato Systems, Inc. has come up with new sound rendering technology—which it calls "the next step in audio evolution." Thanks to Staccato's innovative SynthCore software technology, sound is created from the ground up, based on the underlying physics and mathematics of how a sound is actually produced. Instead of using pre-recorded music and sounds, the Staccato audio rendering engine makes it cheaper and far more expedient for game developers to create sounds that are appropriate for a specific application. This eliminates the need for much of the coding that usually takes place when handling off-sampled sounds. In addition, Staccato's API is compatible with Direct Sound and Direct Music.

Currently, Staccato's sound engine can be heard in EA Sports' *NASCAR Revolution* racing game for the PC. *NASCAR Revolution* features surprisingly authentic sounds associated with live NASCAR events. EA's Marc Farley, lead audio director on *NASCAR Revolution*, explained why the Staccato technology is so useful: "With traditional samples, the changes were usually limited to playback pitch and volume. For engines, this often meant that a realistic-sounding sample would sound unrealistic when playing outside a very narrow range, due to the change in RPMs. So, when an engine was really winding out at redline, the sample would sound weak. The Staccato model allows us to program exactly how the engine should sound based on real-time game parameters such as RPM, speed, load, damage, etc. Based on these parameters, the sound is rendered in a way that is just not possible with samples."



**EA is using Staccato's technology in its games.**

Staccato anticipates its technology to be used in many future titles from some of the biggest names in the industry, and by the end of the year, it expects to be working with more than 30 companies. *GW*

*Continued from the Cover*

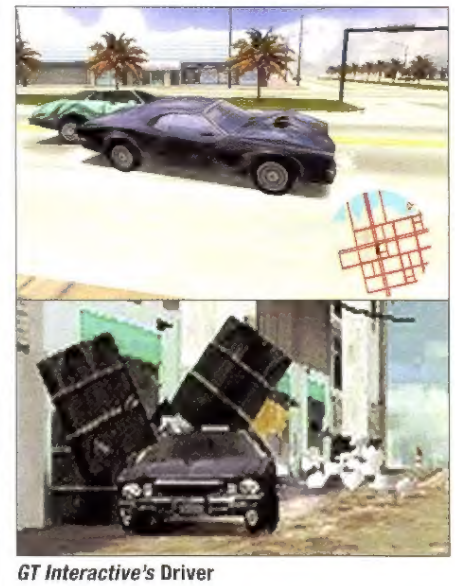
# GT Takes Consumers to Driving School

unique gameplay concepts and over-the-top action not normally associated with past games.

GT Interactive thinks it has just the ticket with a new action/driving title for PlayStation and PC called *Driver*. *Driver* is a mission-based, thrill-a-minute ride that will have gamers driving the getaway car through meticulously detailed cities like New York, Miami, San Francisco and L.A. Mission objectives include bank heists, picking up shipments, running from cops and everything else associated with being a part of the criminal underground.

Being developed by Reflections Interactive of *Destruction Derby* fame, *Driver* is already receiving favorable coverage from mainstream consumer publications. Scheduled to ship in July, GT is calling this game its "biggest launch ever." The company is confident it will be well received, but to make certain, *Driver* will be backed by a $3-5 million marketing campaign.

Starting in early July, GT will begin airing commercials across syndicated and cable TV. If all goes well, it will re-launch the TV campaign in September. In addition, an extensive print campaign will run in most videogame magazines as well as non-game publications like *Maxim*, *Rolling Stone* and *ESPN* magazine. On top of that, in-store promotions and POP merchandise, like counter cards, mobiles, posters and danglers, will flood retail stores beginning in June. GT is also supporting the game online through a dedicated website, www.driver.gtgames.com.


**GT Interactive's Driver**

*Driver* will be GT's top attraction at the upcoming E3 Expo in May and is certain to be high on most consumers' wish-lists this summer. *GW*

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# Season Opener for MLB Sponsored Games

## *MLB Properties works to promote baseball through videogames*

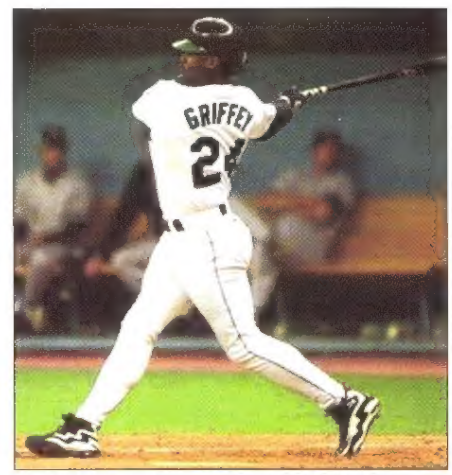
*By Ben Rinaldi*

The 1999 baseball season may be in its infancy, but Major League Baseball Properties, MLB's licensing arm responsible for promoting baseball is already in mid-season form. Coming off its most popular season in years, MLB Properties has had little problem selling baseball and lining up licensing deals for the new season, chief among them are the MLB licensed videogames.

1999 will see eight new games across five different platforms: PlayStation, Nintendo 64, PC, Game Boy Color and Dreamcast. MLB intends to leverage the popularity of videogames with a three-tiered marketing strategy consisting of a comprehensive advertising and public relations campaign, in-stadium sampling and special retail promotions.

The in-stadium demo program is particularly important and is a continuation of last year's successful team-up with Sony and Nintendo. Interactive kiosks were distributed to six big league ball parks and this year the kiosks will be distributed in even more stadiums playing the latest baseball games, *MLB 2000* from Sony and *Ken Griffey Jr's Slugfest* from Nintendo.

*Jacobs Field, home of the Cleveland Indians*

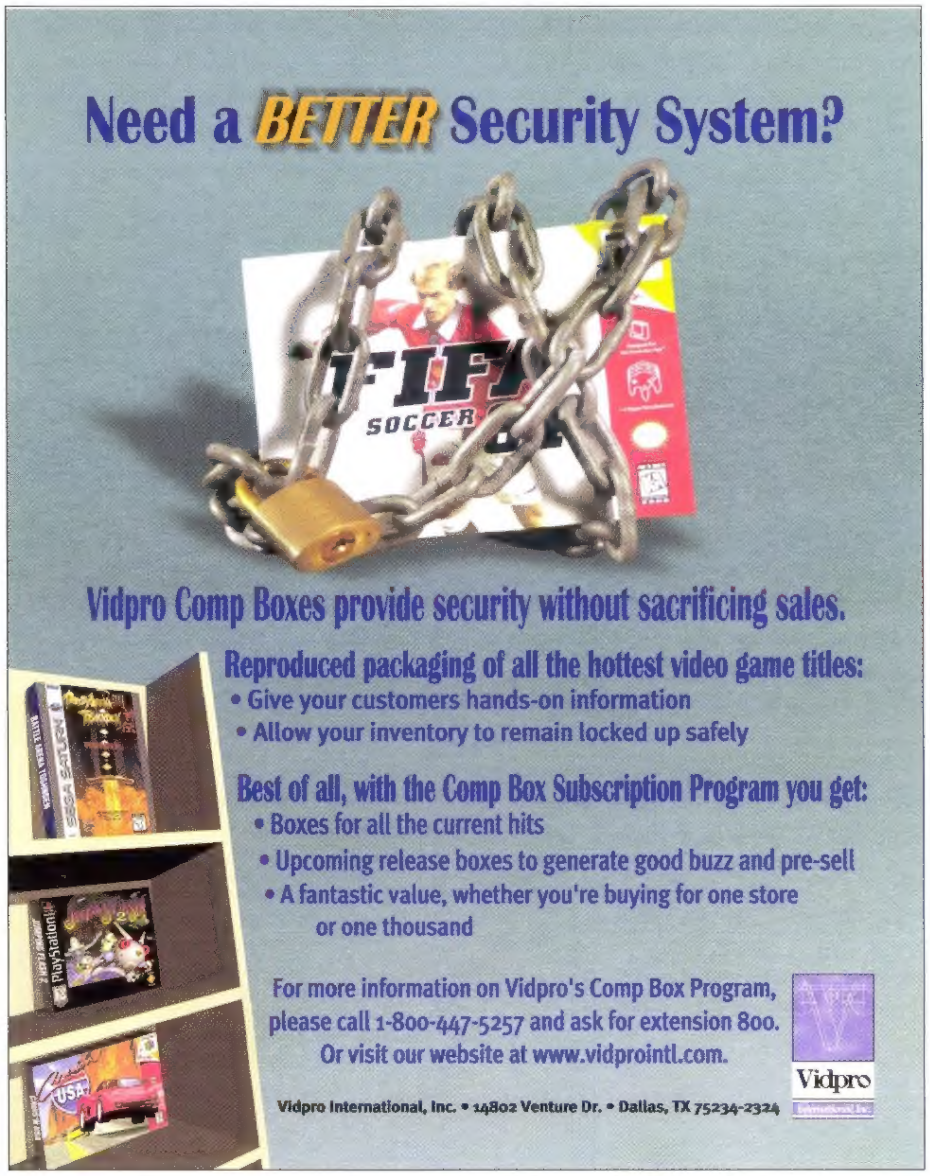


*Ken Griffey Jr. is baseball's brightest star.*

"We're going to be very aggressive this year in terms of retail marketing," said Brad Schlachter, licensing director for MLB Properties. "Last year we did some major promotions with retailers, like Blockbuster, and we're looking to support the category even more this year." MLB's retail partners this year include Blockbuster, Toys R Us and Electronics Boutique.

An avid gamer himself, Schlachter believes that the increased marketing will help surpass last year's effort that saw baseball leapfrog Hockey in terms of videogame popularity. According to NPD TRSTS numbers, unit sales for baseball games in 1998 jumped 116% compared to 1997 and currently it's the third most popular sport among gamers, trailing only football and basketball. If this year is anything like 1998, baseball-related game sales will overtake basketball.

MLB Properties is happy, but not completely satisfied with where baseball sits at the moment. Schlachter knows it needs to build off of the magic of last year. "It's all about the game and last year's homerun chase really brought excitement back to baseball. Now we need to capitalize on that excitement," he said. ***GW***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# Radica Captures a Tiger

*By Andy Eddy*

Radica Games Limited has set up an exclusive worldwide license agreement with Nike that will add Tiger Woods to its line of handheld games. The first product, *Tiger Woods Ultimate Golf*, is slated for release this fall, and Radica is planning to add other Woods-branded products next year. The company has other existing sports handhelds covering Nascar car racing, bowling, fishing, soccer and golf, in addition to handheld casino games (such as blackjack and slots), combat games, classics (such as checkers, tic-tac-toe and solitaire) and "extreme" games (such as inline skating and mountain biking).

According to Radica's statement today, *Tiger Woods Ultimate Golf* is shaped like a golf club, and the control interface has the player swinging it to get the ball in play—sensors in the unit detect swing speed and direction, which enables more realistic gameplay. Radica claims that swing errors will affect the shot faithfully. A lower-priced, pocket-sized version called *Tiger Woods Power Golf* will be brought out at a later date. ***GW***

## For Up-To-The-Minute News, Visit GameDAILY.com

**Disney Combines Websites**—Disney.com has received a major facelift and has been combined with its "subscription service," which, it claims, will make the site a must-see family destination on the web. According to a release sent out today, the site is a merger Disney.com with the existing Disney's Blast Online under the tagline "Where the Magic Lives Online," and will be made up of "channels" to separate the information into smaller topical segments. Included are channels with games for all ages; text and interactive stories; varied family content, such as online shopping and vacation packages; live chats and events with Disney characters and celebrities; updates on movies, music and TV; and other activities. Disney's Club Blast will still be a pay-for subscription service, with prices of $5.95 a month or $39.95 a year. Disney states that Club Blast will soon include an instant messenger application called BlastPad that is much like America Online's Buddy Lists, so that club members can stay in contact with each other. The Disney sites remain part of the Go Network partnership between Infoseek and Disney.

**Hastings Forms E-commerce Site**—Hastings Entertainment, Inc., a multimedia entertainment superstore, plans to launch a new e-commerce site, www.gohastings.com. According to the company, the site will allow customers to access over 10 million new and used entertainment products, contemporary gifts and toys. In addition, the site will also carry best selling books. The site is expected to launch within the next 45 days and will be supported by a national advertising campaign.

# Mindscape Brings Virtual Babyz to the PC

*By Karen Jones*

The software genre that most closely resembles life imitating art, or at least the sci-fi variety, has to be the "virtual life" group. If Mindscape Entertainment has its way, it will soon own the genre. Not only is it publishing sequels for its best-selling *Petz* line with *Dogz 4* and *Catz 4*, where users care for their on screen pets, but fans of these computer-generated "life forms" will soon be able to nurture the first virtual babies with the fall release of *Babyz* ($29.95).

The *Babyz* CD-ROM comes with one infant, described as "desktop babydoll," and, most importantly, IBM's ViaVoice technology which allows owners to speak to their little charges while they teach them the basics, including walking, interacting, playing and talking. Yes, the babies will eventually respond to the owner's speech and talk back just like, dare we say it, real life? If one baby isn't enough, two more can be "adopted" for free via the website, www.Babyz.net.

Babyz

Creatures Adventures

Also ahead for Mindscape's virtual life roster are two more additions to the popular *Creatures* series: *Creatures 3* and *Creatures Adventures*, featuring the little artificial beings called Norms. *C3* promises to push further the limits of "digital biology," while Adventures is targeted for a young audience. *GW*

# Infogrames Reports Strong Growth

*By Ben Rinaldi*

Infogrames Entertainment has reported good news for consolidated net profit and operating income in the six months ended December 31, 1998 (first half fiscal 1999). Thanks to strong international sales from *Mission: Impossible* for Nintendo 64 and *V-Rally* for PlayStation, profits rose 40 percent compared to the same period in the previous year. Net profit for the most recent period totaled $11.7 million and operating income was $18.1 million.

"In just half of the current fiscal year, Infogrames has realized an operating income equivalent to the $18.1 million earned during the full year ended June 30, 1998," said Bruno Bonnell, chief executive officer of Infogrames Entertainment. "This performance comes as a result of Infogrames attaining critical mass allowing the company to control major territories, while providing the resources for internal expansion."

The internal expansion Bonnell is referring to includes recent acquisitions of key developers, including Psygnosis' Paris development team responsible for *ODT* for N64 and *3X Science of War* for PC. In addition, the company recently added Gremlin Group. *GW*

**Profit and Loss Statement**

*(Dollar amounts in millions; 1997 results restated on pro forma basis)*

## On The Move

### Industry Personnel Changes

***S3***

S3 announced strategic management additions which include the hiring of Greg van den Dries as VP of corporate marketing and Andrew Wolfe Ph.D. as chief technology officer (CTO). van den Dries most recently held the position of CEO and president of Natural Computing. Dr. Wolfe joined S3 in June of 1997 as director of technology and was quickly promoted to the position of VP of systems integration where he led S3's mobile design teams and headed the initial development of S3's first integrated products.

***THQ Inc.***

THQ has bolstered its marketing and licensing departments by appointing Alison Locke to senior vice president of sales and marketing, Germaine Gioia to vice president of licensing and Joseph Adney to vice president of marketing.
Locke has been a senior member of THQ's management team for eight years, serving as vice president of sales and, most recently, senior vice president of software sales. In her new role, Locke will serve as a strategic business manager, overseeing the two groups and building the U.S. sales and marketing departments. Gioia, who has been vice president of marketing since 1995 will be responsible for securing licensed content worldwide for THQ's ongoing product development efforts and managing licensor relationships.
Adney, who joins THQ from Baskin-Robbins, will oversee all U.S. marketing functions, including product packaging, advertising, publicity and promotions.

***Sony Computer Entertainment of America***

Sony Computer Entertainment of America has promoted Kazuo (Kaz) Hirai to the position of president and chief operating officer. Hirai, a 15-year Sony veteran, has played a crucial role in the success of PlayStation in North America.

***3Dlabs Inc.***

Josephine Mong is stepping down after 10 months of serving as public relations manager at 3Dlabs. A replacement has not yet been named.

***GT Interactive***

GT has appointed former Activision executive, John Baker IV, as president and chief operating officer. Baker's responsibilities include overseeing strategic planning, mergers, acquisitions, manufacturing and distribution, legal affairs and IT. Baker will report directly to GT's new CEO, Thomas Heymann.

## News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits... News Bits...

**3DO Posts New Requiem Demo**—3DO this week announced the availability of a new demo for its *Requiem* game, a first-person shooter with a religious back story. You play as an angel named Malachi, who has been sent to Earth to "stop Hell's legions from destroying mankind." Rather than the standard weapons—pistol, shotgun and rocket launcher, for instance—Malachi can handle foes in combat by turning them into pillars of salt, making their blood boil and manipulating them into fighting each other. The *Requiem* demo is available at http://www.3do.com/requiem/demo/demo.htm and can be downloaded in two ways: as a full 32MB file or in four smaller segmented files (three 8MB files and one 8.8 MB file).

**Amazon Joins the Ranks in Auction Rage**—this week Amazon.com introduced online auctions, joining the ranks of such websites as eBay and Yahoo Auctions, linking buyers and sellers in Internet-based, garage sale-like activity. According to an emailed announcement to members of Amazon community—which started as an online book seller, though it has expanded to offer videos and music products as well—buyers are being guaranteed "a safe auction experience...on the honor system." The guarantee is only offered on products under $250; more details are available at Amazon's new auction website page.

**Aureal to Show at Microsoft Event**—Aureal had its Vortex AU8810 chip, Vortex2 chip and associated products on display at the Windows Hardware Engineering Conference 99, better known as WinHEC 99. The annual event—which Microsoft explains gives "access to the technologies, products and people you need to develop hardware for advancing the platform"—was held April 7 through 9 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. An Aureal spokesperson said WinHEC 99 will enable the company to work on "existing and upcoming relationships with PC OEMs and systems integrators." It will also be demonstrating content that's come out of a partnership with Flatland Online, which has culminated in cutting-edge 3D web products, and its latest A3D 2.0 3D audio technology.

**Digital Music Discussions Continue**—More meetings were held in New York City to discuss the Secure Digital Music Initiative (SDMI), which will result in standards on the delivery of music in digital form. The meetings comprised of the second organizational meeting and the third meeting of the Portable Device Working Group (PDWG). According to a release, more than 110 companies participated in the meetings; and 28 companies had proposed technologies for the PDWG in answer to a call for proposals. The PDWG is working toward guidelines that could be completed by the end of June, which would enable its use in products available as soon as this holiday season. The SDMI is targeted for completion by March 31, 2000.

# Southpeak Goes Bowling with the Flintstones

*By Karen Jones*

It's "yabba-dabba-do time" with the Flintstones family, as the 30-year-old cartoon classic makes the interactive leap from TV to PC in a new bowling game from Southpeak Interactive. Releasing in the fourth quarter of 1999, *Flintstones Bedrock Bowling* (working title, $19.95) features lovable and, in this case, rocking and rolling denizens of Bedrock, Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble, in their first arcade-style bowling bash.

What gives *Bedrock Bowling*, developed by Adrenalin Interactive, an edge on the competition? According to Ray Ellis, Southpeak's external product development manager, it is its wide-open setting. Instead of placing the game indoors with a pristine set of smooth, straight lanes, the entire town of Bedrock has been transformed into giant set of bowling alleys with lanes going every which way. "The player will navigate the Flintstone character, who sits in a fi sliced ball, through twelve 'lanes' of Bedrock", Ellis tells *GameWEEK*, and adds, "The pins will be scattered throughout the lane along with power-ups and pre-historic obstacles. This is a very different type of bowling game than anyone is used to, and, we think, it will catch on fast." He places the target age at eight and up, and, with three levels of difficulty, plus an up to eight multi-player mode, he is confident that *Bedrock* will appeal to both new arcade players and seasoned pros.

**Flintstones Bedrock Bowling**

Meanwhile, *Bedrock* is part of Southpeak's new "Fun Stuff for All Ages" line of products. Melanie Bullock, product manager for the game, tells *GameWEEK* that marketing plans include print ads running in key family publications, plus extensive web and broadcast advertising. Also, Southpeak plans to sponsor radio contests and giveaways in the top 30 U.S. radio markets. ***GW***


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# Lego Lineup Branches Out

*By Karen Jones*

*Lego Friends* (September, $29.95) is the debut title in a new series called *Lego Software for Girls*, and it follows the adventures of a group of pre-teens who are part of a pop band called "Tuff Stuff." Asked what prompted their entrance into the increasingly crowded girls' market, Gregg Sauter, Lego Media International's North American sales & marketing director, told *GameWEEK* that despite being thought of as a boys' brand, the Lego Group "actually sells a couple of million Lego play-sets to girls each year." He adds, "girls love our current software titles."

Racing enthusiasts can look forward to the July release of *Lego Racers* in three platforms (PC, $39.95; PlayStation, $44.95; N64, $59.95) which allows them to build their own car, then challenge up to five players based on four Lego System play themes: castle, town, space and adventures. Meanwhile, *Lego Rock Raiders* (PC, $39.95; PlayStation, $44.95) billed as a 3D-action/strategy game follows in September. Also available this year, for PC only, is *Legoland* (June, $29.95) where users build and manage a theme park. ***GW***

# MediaBYTES

**Quick Hits along the Multimedia Superhighway**

*By Karen Jones*

***Rugrats World-Win***
It's a PlayStation plus Sony Entertainment, Nickelodeon and Farley's Fruit Snacks launch of Around the World with Rugrats Sweepstakes offering one lucky winner a 14 day globe-trotting trek to Nickelodeon Studio locales. 500 runner-ups will receive PlayStations and copies of the *Rugrats: Search for Reptar* game. Entries can be dropped off now through June 15 at customized PlayStation kiosks, or sent to the address found on specially designed wrappers of Farley's Fruit Snacks.

***Did I Ear That?***
We all know what eye-savers are, but ear-savers? PC users can now get ready to up the ante on white noise with Simon & Schuster Interactive's *EarSaver* ($19.95). Featuring four hours of unique, "ambionic soundscapes," *EarSaver* is background music designed to stimulate your senses without intruding on any tasks at hand.

***Mattel Turns Purple***
Several years ago, Purple Moon ushered in the girl's software market, and now they've been ushered into Mattel Media, which is getting even more serious about giving girls what they want. How Moon's website and *Rockett* CD-ROMs fit into the land of Barbie remains to be seen, but special attention is being paid to the Moon/ Scholastic Publishing launch of a *Rockett's Worldbook* series later this year.

***Hasbro Rebates***
It's called Monopoly Madness and McDonalds is there to spread the word. Between now and June 14, buy a *Monopoly* CD-ROM and get one of four other Hasbro CD-ROM titles free, via a mail-in rebate. This rebate can be found in the usual retail outlets, and they will also be featured on 40 million McDonalds tray liners...and that's a lot of Big Macs. Also, Hasbro's new *Tonka Raceway* CD-ROM has a $20 mail-in rebate offered through June 30.

***And They're Off!***
Prizepoint Entertainment (www.prize-point. com), the website that combines free entertainment programming with special rewards and prizes, has entered the online starting gate with a new partner, the National Thoroughbred Racing Association. Together they are offering an all expenses paid trip to the Triple Crown, as in the Kentucky Derby, Preakness and Belmont Stakes, for the cyber-jockey who can win Prizepoint's up and running horse racing trivia game.

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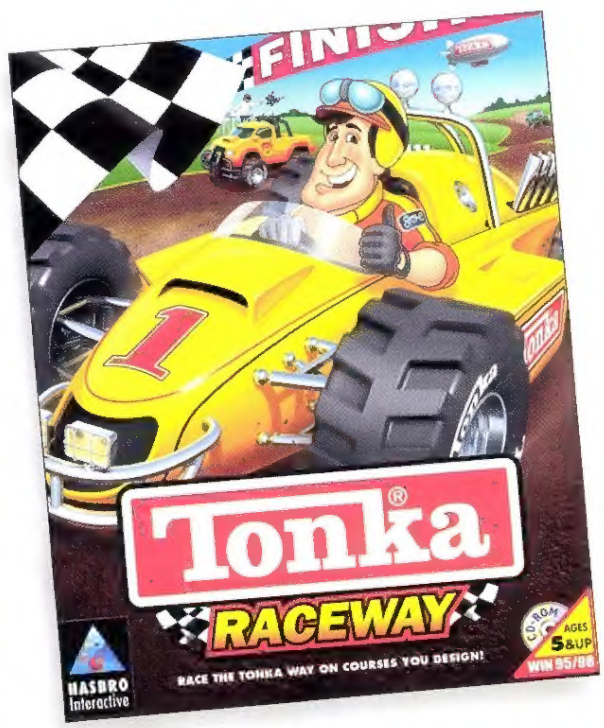
# Big Retail Push for Hasbro: Monopoly, Tonka & Windows CE

*By Steve Traiman*

Hasbro Interactive has a triple-header under way for retail outlets—that is, major promotional tie-ins with McDonalds for *Monopoly Madness!*, with Tonka line for the new *Tonka Raceway* CD-ROM and with the new line of Windows CE hand-held titles. "Our retail accounts are playing a key role in all three spring campaigns," emphasizes Tim Evans, Hasbro's director of retail channel marketing. "We're involved with account-specific promos as well as with nationwide advertising, marketing and merchandising support." After last year's successful tie-in rebate offer with McDonalds on the *Monopoly* CD-ROM, this year's extension gives any purchaser of that title a choice between four selected titles for free. Included are: *Sorry* for family play, *Trivial Pursuit* for adults, *Tonka Garage* for boys and *My Little Pony* for girls. Kicked off with a full-page McDonalds FSI (free-standing insert) in approximately 50 million Sunday newspapers on March 21, the offer is being promoted on 40 million McDonalds tray liners from March 25 through April 22, but retailers have an extension to June 14. "We've got 14,000 rebate tear pads with some 1.5 million forms in more than 5,000 locations of 34 chains," Evans says. "We also have 1,000 tent cards at checkout counters and 580 double-sided posters for window placements. We put out the sell sheet early this year and got tremendous response across all channels." Among chains involved are: Wal-Mart, Toys R Us, Best Buy, CompUSA, Staples, Office Mart, Office Depot, Sam's Club and B.J.'s. When the *Tonka Raceway* CD-ROM hit retail shelves in early March, the first 100,000 packages had a $20 mail-in rebate offer on any other of the four earlier Tonka game hits including the *Tonka Workshop CD-ROM Playset* that fits on top of the computer keyboard. One neat bonus is the ability for kids to design their own cars in *Tonka Garage* and import them via the website to race on the *Tonka Raceway*, the first for this type of interactivity.




Running through June 30 across the U.S. and Canada, the rebate offer is being supported by a heavy TV campaign from March 15 through April 29 on such cable outlets as Nickelodeon and Nick Jr., Cartoon Network and USA. "There's also an online tie-in with a flashing icon on the home page that for the first time lets consumers download a mail-in rebate coupon," he notes. The rebate and heavy ad support "got us space at retail we ordinarily wouldn't have gotten," he adds. "This includes end-caps at TRU and a Tonka section in Best Buy outlets, as examples."

As the first third-party publisher to create titles for Microsoft's Windows CE operating system, Hasbro delivered *Trivial Pursuit* and *Slingo* to retailers in early March, followed by *Monopoly* and *Scrabble* later in the month. All have an expected under-$30 street price. With research indicating Windows CE customers are heavy Internet users, for the first time ever, Hasbro Interactive is offering downloadable versions of the initial four titles at its retail partners' websites as well as at its own online store. "We're focusing on retail channels where the hand-held computer devices are being sold," Evans emphasizes, "with the office superstore chains all very involved." Packaged in a case similar to DVD-video movies, the games are seen as an add-on impulse buy and are offered in a 24-unit counter display that holds six of each title. There's also strong interest in cross-promotions from several hand-held hardware vendors. "Sharp and Hewlett Packard are among others very interested in an in-store display that would offer 'games to go with the product,' and we're working on several major retail programs for later this spring," he says. *GW*

*Contributions to Retail Line are welcome. Deadline is four weeks prior to issue date, May 10 for the next column in the June 2 issue. Information goes to contributing editor Steve Traiman, phone/fax 201.265.4354, email straiman@mindspring.com. Artwork goes to editorial director Mike Davila at GameWEEK headquarters, 64 Danbury Rd., Suite 500, Wilton, CT 06897, fax 203.761.6184, or digital images via email to mike@gameweek.com.*

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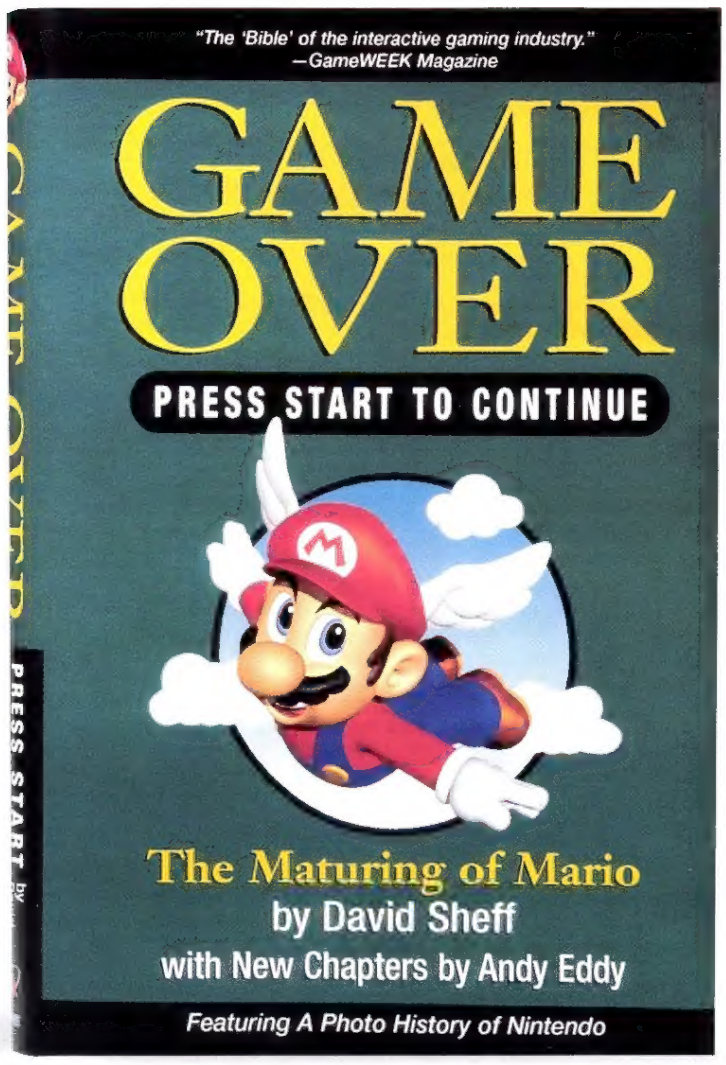
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*Continued from the Cover*

# MechWarrior 3 Rolls Closer to Launch

units have been sold.

*MechWarrior 2* brings the brutal world of futuristic, robotic combat to life. Battling from within the cockpit of a 60-foot tall walking war machine, the BattleMech, gamers live the drama of civil war between two rival factions whose survival depends upon the player's combat skills and faith in the honor of their Clan.

*MechWarrior 3* expands upon the game franchise's story line and takes place in the year 3058, when the Houses of the Inner Sphere have banded together to take on the Clans with a unified force. The overall mission is to defeat all Clan warriors and to abolish completely one of the most feared of all the Clans, the Smoke Jaguars.

Having acquired the *MechWarrior 3* license (not to be confused with the *MechWarrior 2* or *MechWarrior 4* licenses held by Activision and Microsoft, respectively), MicroProse, Inc. has been working directly with BattleTech's creators to expand the universe with *MechWarrior 3*. "What the *MechWarrior* games thus far have done really well is give players a first-person perspective as they pilot a 60-foot tall walking tank that has enough fire power to destroy a city block," said Peter Matiss, product manager at Hasbro Interactive for *MechWarrior 3*. "With *MechWarrior 3*, we've taken that same experience and have raised the bar in every way possible. In its simplest form, *MechWarrior* offers immersive gameplay that gives people a true sense of power and invulnerability. What we've done is take a product that was very appealing and make it even more immersive."

*MechWarrior 3* is being developed by Redmond, Washington-based Zipper Interactive, and uses what MicroProse calls "an extremely robust game engine offering a far greater degree of immersion." "Players can now view the 18 different Mechs from a cockpit or external perspective. The environments are also completely interactive. Anything the player sees is destructible or can be used to their tactical advantage. Craters in the ground can now be created, for example, and used as a hiding place in order to surprise enemies," said Matiss.

MicroProse reports units within the *MechWarrior 3* game can now enter bodies of water and move freely within the game's indoor and outdoor environments. "The special effects generated as Mech units engage in battle are extremely impressive. Each of the 33 weapons has totally different visual effects associated with it," explained Matiss, who believes players will find the new resource management elements of the game both exciting and challenging.

While the *MechWarrior* games to date have proven their sales potential among hard core gamers, Hasbro Interactive is hoping to broaden the appeal of *MechWarrior 3*. "The game is optimized to run wonderfully on high-end PCs with the latest 3D acceleration; however, the game also runs smoothly on a Pentium 166, which makes it available to a much larger gaming audience," said Matiss.

*MechWarrior 3* will certainly appeal to fans of the BattleTech universe from which the *MechWarrior* franchise was born. "The game, however, will also appeal to fans of action/strategy combat simulations looking to experience an instant adrenaline rush as well as an exciting multi-player experience," added Matiss. "Hasbro Interactive as a company has a proven track record of being able to take interactive products and successfully introduce them to larger audiences than usually targeted by the industry. This will also be the case with *MechWarrior 3*, which will benefit from a very substantial launch program."

In the past, Activision's marketing efforts for *MechWarrior 2* were aimed at hardcore gamers. All of the marketing and advertising materials for *MechWarrior 3*, however, will speak to both hardcore and casual gamers. "One of our development goals was to make this game accessible to anyone, allowing casual gamers to experience quickly the sensation a BattleMech's power," said Matiss.

While a pre-launch buzz was generated for this game when it was initially announced in 1997 and then previewed at last year's E³ show, MicroProse/Hasbro Interactive has since launched an extremely aggressive pre-launch advertising and marketing effort for *MechWarrior 3*. This includes distributing a fully interactive, 37-meg downloadable demo and launching a dedicated website (www.mechwarrior3.com) the week of March 22.

"*MechWarrior 3* fully supports the player match-up services offered on The Microsoft Internet Gaming Zone, and we're developing online promotions on the Zone, while at the same time, building upon the strength of the online communities created around *MechWarrior 2*," explained Matiss.

An extensive print ad campaign in all of the consumer gaming magazines is now under way. Teaser ads have begun running and will be replaced by inserts and multi-page spreads as the launch date grows closer. The print campaign for the game will continue at least through the end of 1999.

In conjunction with the game's early-June release, MicroProse/ Hasbro Interactive will be kicking off in-theater advertising as well as a multi-million dollar national television campaign targeting sci-fi fans. The company is also working closely with FASA Corporation, its other licensees on several cross promotions. For example, a novelette based on the game is being created and will most likely be used as a pre-sell item.

MicroProse/Hasbro Interactive is in discussions with Rok, a division of Penguin Publishing (the company responsible for publishing over 40 individually licensed BattleTech and MechWarrior books and novels) regarding an extensive cross-promotional campaign.

"Depending on the retailer, we have a wealth of promotional item possibilities available, ranging from BattleMech miniatures, limited-edition lithograph prints and other much sought after BattleTech merchandise. For this game, we're developing an assortment of in-store POP that leverage *MechWarrior 3*'s graphics. Hasbro Interactive understands the importance of retail, and our in-store presence for this game will be an important part of our overall marketing efforts," said Matiss. "Retailers should be surprised at how well this game performs compared to *MechWarrior 2* and other giant-walking tank games. Even without the MechWarrior name, this game rocks, add in the huge pent up demand there is for this game, which has been four years in the making, and you have a product that is going to be huge."

***In-store POP advertising leveraging* MechWarrior 3*'s graphics are planned for the marketing campaign.***

In order to insure *MechWarrior 3* has a long life cycle, the company is already developing expansion packs, the first of which will be released in time for the holiday season. "*MechWarrior 3* will be a stellar performer for retailers," said Matiss. "Right now, there is a tremendous number of promotional opportunities available to us. We're putting our efforts behind those opportunities we believe will have the greatest impact on sales and the overall popularity of this title. In addition to providing expansion packs, we'll be offering extensive online tournament opportunities designed to keep players excited about this game franchise."

MicroProse/Hasbro Interactive also plans to announce major promotional partners, both within and outside the game industry, prior to the launch of *MechWarrior 3*. According to MicroProse, the primary *MechWarrior 3* title offers 20 single and multi-player missions; however, the multi-player aspect of the game will be broadened dramatically with the first expansion pack.

In January 1999, FASA Corporation announced that Microsoft Corporation purchased FASA Interactive Technologies, Inc. of Chicago, IL from its stockholders, of which FASA Corporation was the largest. FASA Interactive is the producer of the MechCommander game and the forthcoming *MechWarrior 4* and *MechCommander 2* computer games. This acquisition does not affect the release of *MechWarrior 3*.

In addition to future *MechWarrior* and *MechCommander* games, Microsoft is also exploring opportunities for FASA Corp.'s other properties, including the Shadowrun, EarthDawn and Renegade Legion universes.

"The acquisition of FASA Interactive reflects our commitment to growing our business with a smaller portfolio of top-quality games," said Ed Fries, general manager of Microsoft's games group. "The MechWarrior franchise is one of the best-selling series of PC games in history and is synonymous with groundbreaking technology and compelling gameplay. "

While in the future, the *MechWarrior 2* and *MechWarrior 4* licenses will be exploited by both Activision and Microsoft, MicroProse/Hasbro Interactive is expecting long-term success for its *MechWarrior 3*.

Microsoft has not yet announced a release date for *MechWarrior 4*; however, the game is not expected in the near future and probably won't interfere in any way with sales of MicroProse/Hasbro Interactive's *MechWarrior 3*. ***GW***

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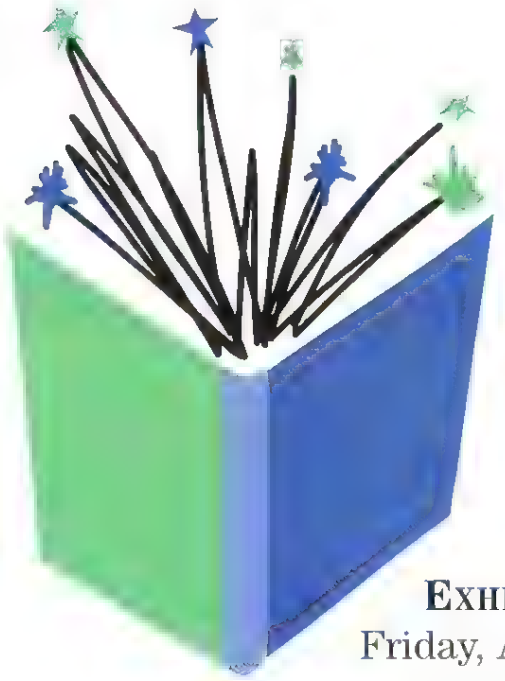

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*Continued from the Cover*

# Dreamcast Strategy Reveals Marketing Nuances

down in the document. The document appears to be the kind that would be used to present goals to potential partners and analysts, which offers a breakdown of the many elements it's planning to introduce along with the Dreamcast. It brings up the basic issues that any product—in or out of the interactive industry— needs to address, such as how Dreamcast can be differentiated from other competing systems, how to build an audience/community for long-term appeal and the identification of potential revenue sources. However, it also details product-specific items that Sega hopes will add to Dreamcast's overall appeal.

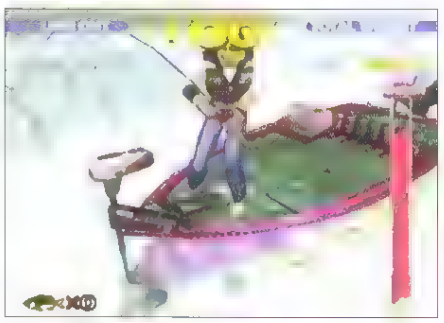
One such topic address within the document is an element called "Zine." While the standard term "zine" originally indicated an independent (and usually photocopied) publication about a certain topic, short for "fanzine," it now has a larger meaning of an online or web-based publication, because of the ease of creation and global availability. Sega's "Zine" seems to be a web-based publication focused on Dreamcast, as it notes availability to users through browser or WebTV.

Notably, "Zine" or "DC Zine" as another page refers to the "Complementary online services to games"—is seen as a broad-based delivery system for content and promotions from expanded branding, demos, game information, community-building chat, "buddy lists" (for paging and conversation between users) and even rankings. Another topic that's indicated is "email," so you have to wonder if Sega will jump on the bandwagon of offering free email accounts as part of the Dreamcast "Zine" membership, much like Hotmail.

Another strategic focus is first posed as a question: "Can Sega use Dreamcast to capture some of the online gaming market and leverage the skills and functionality of Heat.net?" In the document, this element is noted under the name "Kage." While it's the name of a character within the *Virtua Fighter* universe, Kage—also noted as "DC.net" in the document—is probably the working title for the online-gaming network that will be set up for Dreamcast players, much as Heat.net has been a driving force behind Segasoft's PC games and other network games, such as the *Quake* series, *Unreal*, the *WarCraft* line and *Baldur's Gate*. In addition to online gaming, Kage seems to be set up to also provide chat, buddy list functions and information passing.

With Dreamcast providing easy connection to online services through its 56K modem—as announced by President/CEO Bernie Stolar at the recent Game Developer Conference Sega is hoping to push online games. This is an aspect of console-based gaming that has been non-existent, though companies have pitched modems previously. Quite some time ago, Nintendo announced plans for its Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) to be linked into a network that would enable entry into lottery games in Minnesota, but the plan was scrapped after some public outcry. Ironically, Sega had a product for the Genesis system that it showed at a Consumer Electronics Show called "Telegenesis Modem," which similarly was scrapped.

***Sega's* Sonic Adventure *(left) is considered by many industry people to be one of the best new videogames for 1999. Midway's* NBA Showtime *(right).***



***Sega's* Get Bass**

### COMMERCE OR BUST

The Internet has inspired new ways of doing business. Companies like Amazon.com have brought in a lot of customers—if not made money also—by powering the introduction of "e-commerce," a relatively new yet in demand method of selling goods. You can imagine the synergy of having a system such as Dreamcast, which is expected to be fully capable of getting on the Internet in addition to just playing games online.

Part of Sega's strategy document is devoted to "E-business," which it defines with goals of "increased profitability" and making Sega the "Gaming Entertainment Leader." While revenue is one obvious aspect to setting up such a system where the consumer can buy game-related merchandise, software and perhaps even the Dreamcast system itself Sega also expects the creation of an e commerce site will be a "marketing tool to promote [the] game and network use" and "develop and own [the] relationship with [the] consumer."

Those sound like aspirations that Sega would aim for in building up lucrative relationships with members of the retailer community—which some within the industry have noted was a missing link in the Saturn's marketing program. Obviously, an e-commerce program cuts out the stores from the equation, leaving Sega to talk directly with the consumer in the sales process. It's left to be seen whether Sega is planning on taking advantage of the lower costs and higher profit margins by selling direct to the consumer, at the cost of retailer relationships, or if it'll find some way to use the e-commerce structure to also boost the retailers with which it's collaborating to sell Dreamcast. The body count for such an endeavor has to be packed with personnel, and indeed Sega's strategy document has a sizable organizational chart under its E-Business program proposal.

### SEGA: MUM'S THE WORD

In all fairness, there's no guarantee that the document received at the *GameWEEK* editorial office will end up being an accurate representation of what Sega's final path with Dreamcast will be. However, while the document was obviously a conceptual draft and may never come to fruition as written, it does carry a March 1999 time stamp, so it represents a recent take on Sega's views toward marketing Dreamcast. Conversely, plans frequently change, and as the competition shapes up, Sega can be expected to alter and morph its strategies in an effort to stay ahead of the others

After being contacted by *GameWEEK* for comment to this story, Sega spokesman Dave Karraker wouldn't confirm or deny the details within the strategy document. However, he did state, "Sega has not to this date announced its Internet strategy. We can confirm that [Sega is] working with Segasoft for the Dreamcast's Internet component. We can also confirm that it's not Heat.net. We are working with Segasoft because of its success and expertise in building and maintaining Heat.net, which has built up 1.2 million users."

This document does leave some obvious questions, which become more pressing as we get closer to the 1999 holiday season. Will Dreamcast launch on the expected and alliterative September 9, 1999 (9/9/99)? The presentation notes in a couple of locations that this is the target date, though much needs to be accomplished to meet that time-frame. Can Sega avoid losing some of its market to Sony's and Nintendo's "FUD"? That's the marketing "fear, uncertainty and doubt" that sets up consumers for concern over whether they should buy the system that's out first (in this case, the Dreamcast) or wait for a more potentially powerful game system and maybe better supported down the road.

Also, what kind of software library will Sega have available to back up the Dreamcast's launch? Saturn was notably lacking in desired games when it was launched, which many logged as dooming the system. However, Nintendo's Super NES launch in 1991 was ridiculed for the three games it offered (none were third-party releases), but development of third-party releases, such as Capcom's *Street Fighter* and the contributions of other notable publishers, had SNES catching up pretty well with Sega's Genesis, even after Sega's two year headstart. It's hard to say whether Sega's six games at Dreamcast's launch (as noted in the strategy presentation) will set down an inviting enough welcome mat to consumers—and too early to tell if Sega's plans will be the spark that will put the see-sawing entertainment company at the top of its game once again. ***GW***

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# Developer's Corner:

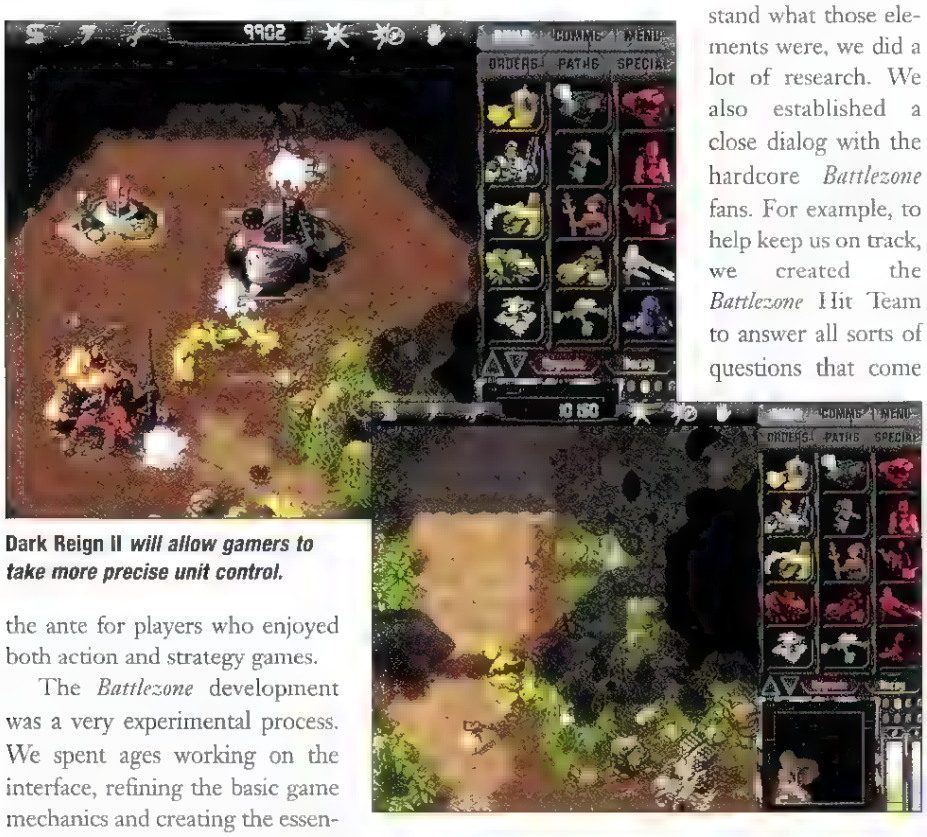
# Repeat Performance: The Art of Making a Sequel

*By Andrew Goldman,*
*CEO of Pandemic Studios*

Sequels are the best and the worst of the gaming industry. At their best, sequels are games refined to perfection that we can quickly pick up and have a blast playing. At their worst, sequels are lame and boring add-ons to something that we've played before. In the end, you've got to know when it is time to do something totally new, and when it is time to refine what you've got.

At Pandemic Studios, we're currently making two big sequels—*Battlezone II* and *Dark Reign II*. Each provides completely different challenges and opportunities, but, we feel, both are good examples of how to approach making a sequel.

When we made *Battlezone*, we felt it was time to create something totally new. Although there are some very cool elements to the classic vector graphic arcade game, we decided early on in the development of the game not to create a straight remake of the original. Instead, we set out to forge a brand new genre by combining action and strategy for the first time in a fully 3D engine. By putting players in command of a whole army, while they fought on the front lines of the battlefield, we were significantly upping the ante for players who enjoyed both action and strategy games.




**Dark Reign II *will allow gamers to take more precise unit control.***

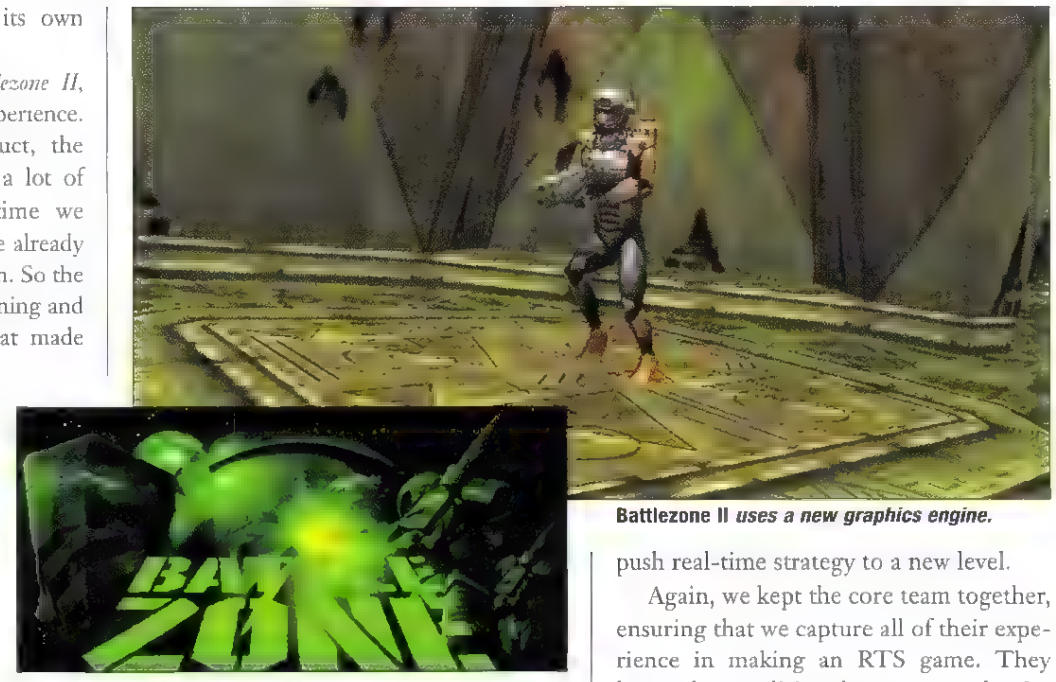
The *Battlezone* development was a very experimental process. We spent ages working on the interface, refining the basic game mechanics and creating the essential AI. It was an exhilarating experience of solving each problem only to discover the next. In the end, we released a critically acclaimed product (two Action Game of the Year awards, one Strategy Game of the Year Runner Up award) that players loved, and, most importantly, it established its own unique position in the marketplace.

Now we're moving onto *Battlezone II*, and it is an entirely different experience. After completing the first product, the whole team knew there was still a lot of room for improvement. This time we looked at the product and knew we already had more than enough to work with. So the *Battlezone* team is hard at work refining and adding to the core experience that made *Battlezone* so amazing.

In order to achieve our goal, the first essential step was to keep the original team together. We had an extremely talented group of people working on the original project, and they all had great ideas for topping the last game. Furthermore, everyone on the team had an intimate knowledge of the technology and the ability to move it forward quickly. Finally, this is a well-developed team that can efficiently work together from day one.

The second objective in making the sequel was to avoid the natural temptation to reinvent everything. There were a lot of things that people loved about *Battlezone*, and it is essential that we continue to deliver on these elements. To help us really understand what those elements were, we did a lot of research. We also established a close dialog with the hardcore *Battlezone* fans. For example, to help keep us on track, we created the *Battlezone* Hit Team to answer all sorts of questions that come up during the course of development. With 3,000 members, we can get overnight feedback from a real sample of our audience.

Finally, we've focused on carefully managing all of the new technology. We developed a lot of new technology for the first *Battlezone*. For *Battlezone*, it is essential that we keep the core that worked and move on to add killer new features, as well as refine the old ones. At the same time, we've got to be careful that the technology does not get stale. For example, even though *Battlezone* had great graphics, we've ripped out the entire graphics engine and replaced it with one that will lead the industry.




**Battlezone II *uses a new graphics engine.***

One other element that has really shaped how we approach making the sequel to *Battlezone* is the fact that the game has no significant competitors. This allows us to focus on making an incredible game, rather than worrying about entering into a marketing feature race. This is the key area where our experience differs from the development process on *Dark Reign II*.

The first *Dark Reign* went into the extremely well-developed Real-Time Strategy (RTS) marketplace with the intention of incrementally advancing the gameplay. *Dark Reign* received much recognition for introducing innovations in gameplay, but it did not try to evolve the genre radically, since there was an established RTS gameplay paradigm which was, and still is, enjoying tremendous success in the marketplace. Oddly, the first *Dark Reign* development resembles our process in making *Battlezone II*, whereas with *Dark Reign II*, the team is taking more of a first-time approach to the sequel—similar to the development of the first *Battlezone*.

Since *Dark Reign* came out, there has been a flood of RTS games, and, to us, the format is feeling kind of played. With *Dark Reign II*, we're working to bring something fresh and innovative to the experience. Fortunately, the technology has advanced to the point where we can push real-time strategy to a new level.

Again, we kept the core team together, ensuring that we capture all of their experience in making an RTS game. They have the traditional game mechanics under their belt, which has allowed them to be extremely adventurous in developing new technology. The *Dark Reign II* team is making the move into dramatic 3D, but they're taking it further than simply making beautiful graphics. The new game takes full advantage of more realistic scale and the ability to take more precise control over your units. We believe that the end result will be a game that not only looks stunning, but also plays in a familiar, yet new way. Line of sight is more obvious and more easily used to a player's advantage. You can use the jungle canopy as cover to move your units in for a stealthy attack. You can put snipers in a tree and watch him go from being an average unit to a super unit. The great thing about this is that the game has richer gameplay, but at the same time it is simpler and more intuitive.

So, as you can see from our experiences with these two products, no two sequels are alike. While on the surface both *Battlezone II* and *Dark Reign II* represent significant departures from their predecessors, the game improvements vary tremendously between the two products. There is no easy assessment that one type of sequel is better than the other, but each carries with it different degrees of risk and reward both for the developer/publisher and the gaming public. What we have found to be consistent for both products is the value of retaining key members from the original teams, listening carefully to the products' fan base, and, most importantly, not making the mistake of throwing the "baby out with the bath water." If approached correctly, sequels can be the most rewarding and successful products to make. ***GW***

# 5 YEARS

# NOT 5 MINUTES

# The News Leader
# Entertainment Indust

*May Issue 1995* *May Issue 1996* *May Issue 1997*

# 5 Years—Not 5 Minutes.

# Game

# for the Interactive ry for 5 years running.

May Issue 1999 COMING SOON: May Issue 1999

# Leadership Takes Time.

# WEEK®

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# Reviews

GameWEEK Reviews reflect the [illegible] potential [illegible] products in the pertinent retail [illegible]. We [illegible] with beta versions and [illegible] we feel are the most accurate [illegible] when [illegible] GameWEEK Reviews [illegible] products or [illegible] new owners of gamepads, the [illegible] and [illegible] although these [illegible] new grand [illegible] GameWEEK reviews do not intend to help or hinder a product's overall success [illegible]

## GameWEEK RATINGS SYSTEM

**A** – [illegible] be one of the best selling games for that part[illegible] platform. Strong [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] ment's part. [illegible] and [illegible] design. This is a must-play title for [illegible]

**B** – [illegible] some areas it will see work and [illegible] but not to the extent of "A" titles. Gamers should make sure it can run around deep enough to satisfy their individual [illegible] demands with some to spare

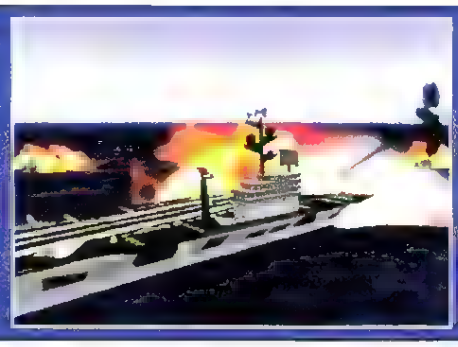
**C** – A good game that will sell about "average" in terms of sales [illegible] owing in a few departments. It is therefore not worthy of an "A" [illegible] game's status and deserves especially when [illegible] titles

**D** – A game that is supported in terms of marketing by the manufacturer [illegible] quality and should have sold [illegible] level. This [illegible] may result from poor [illegible] poor timing [illegible]

**F** – A product that should have been considered [illegible] not to release. Although [illegible] impressive the final [illegible] will sell substantially discounted prices

## Software Reviews

### Fleet Command



**Platform:** PC
**Publisher:** EA/Jane's
**Developer:** Sonalysts
**Available:** May 1999
**MSRP:** $59.95
**Contact:** 650.628.1500
www.ea.com

**GW Rating:** B

| Breakdown | Hype | Marketing | Up Against | Bottom Line |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jane's Combat Simulations is synony mous with the most rea istic battle simulations for the PC. Now, Jane s is releasing its first rea - time strategy game *Fleet Command* At ts core *Fleet Command* is a naval warfare game The game has every major naval/aerial weapon from 19 countries | Not much has been sa d about this title Advertising and market ng has been minima | Look for major launch campaign in May Nationa print in major videogame and military enthusiast publicat ons Extensive online cam- pa gn with banners shel f talkers and posters | *Command and Conquer:Tiberian Sun* *Total Annihilation Kingdoms* | What hardcore gamer could resist a real time strategy game from Jane's? This title will be an instant success with the sim crowd who s familiar with the Jane's name and library of games. Could be a hard sell for everyone else |

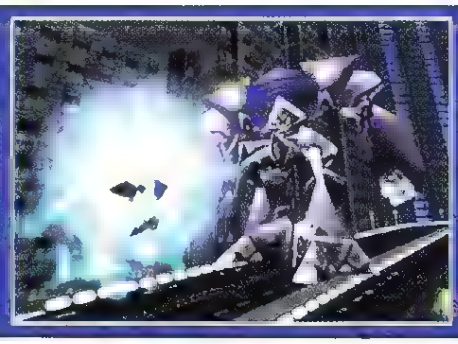
### 3Xtreme

**Platform:** PlayStation
**Publisher:** 989 Studios
**Developer:** 989 Studios
**Available:** May 1999
**MSRP:** $49.95
**Contact:** 650.655.8000
www.989studios.com

**GW Rating:** B

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 989 Studios introduces *3Xtreme* The game fea tures new motion cap tured animation and s packed with authentic moves and tricks *3Xtreme* showcases 13 racers and 23 courses In addition to skateboards and inline skates, players are now able to race on BMX bikes | Th s title has been rela tive y quiet until now. The first two titles did very respectable numbers. The jump to 3D was def - nitely a good move | 30 second TV spot wil air on MTV, ESPN ESPN2, Comedy Central, E, Fox Sports Net, Speedvision, TNN and TBS/TNT 125 000 con ven ence stores across the U S will have the *3Xtreme* logo on Slim Jim packaging/meat snacks positioned at cash registers | *Street SkBer* *Rush Down* | W th the other extreme sports titles being mediocre at best *3Xtreme* has a good chance of making an impact and selling through quite nicely |

### Slave Zero

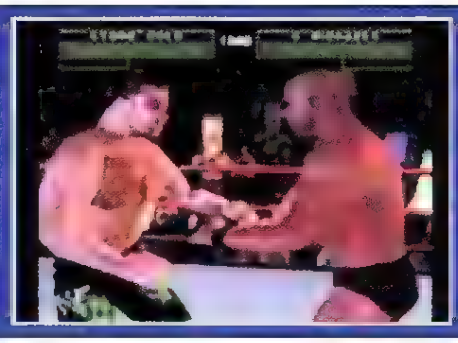


**Platform:** PC
**Publisher:** Accolade
**Developer:** Accolade
**Available:** June
**MSRP:** $49.95
**Contact:** 408.985.1700
www.accolade.com

**GW Rating:** A⁻

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| One of the most highly anticipated titles from last year is almost ready for release. *Slave Zero* from Accolade gives play ers control of a giant bio mechan cal war mach ne of the future in a battle aga nst rival forces in a vast metropolis The real time 3D engine allows for highly detailed animated graphics. | Overall hype has been positive *Slave Zero* has already made the covers of some of the PC gam ng magazines, and the nitial response to the title has been overwhelmingly good | Unique print media cam paign lined up to increase awareness of the package design Single page ads in most of the PC game books Presently running a downloadable demo on the internet Spec a advertising promotions with key retailers Unique POS initiative s in the works | This title is rather unique to the PC action genre, and there is nothing real y like it out there at the moment | It was a good move that Accolade shifted focus from driving and sports games to develop a title like *Slave Zero* Gamers have been waiting for this type of action-shooter Totally immersive worlds combined with gorgeous visua s and tight controls make *Slave Zero* a potential hit |

### WWF Attitude



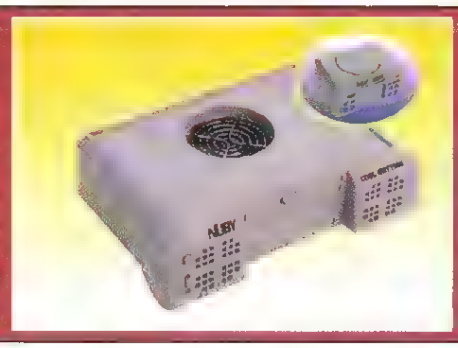
**Platform:** N64, PlayStation
**Publisher:** Acclaim
**Developer:** Iguana West
**Available:** May 1999
**MSRP:** $59.95, $49.95
**Contact:** 516.656.5000
www.acclaimnation.com

**GW Rating:** A

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Acclaim had great suc cess with *WWF War Zone*. Now hoping to take wrestling games up a notch is *WWF Attitude*, featuring over 55 WWF superstars in all-out wrestling action New features include specialty matches, new arenas and the first ever "Create Your Own Pay Per View Mode." | Last year's game was well received, and the hype has been generally good for the sequel Early coverage by the press has been positive | Multi-mill on market ng and advertising cam paign. National TV cam paign starring the top wrestlers in the WWF National print in major videogame and wrestling publications Extensive online campaign on acclaimsports com with banner advertising. Radio giveaways. | *WCW Nitro* *WCW Thunder* *WCW Revenge* | Acclaim is pul ing out all the stops to ens.re ts last WWF-licensed game becomes a sure hit The graphics have been improved greatly, and the added features and colossal marketing push will make it a top se ler |

## Hardware Reviews

### Cool Rhythm



**Platform:** PlayStation
**Publisher:** Nuby
**Developer:** Nuby
**Available:** Now
**MSRP:** $34.95
**Contact:** 888.NUBY.MFG
www.nubyonline.com

**GW Rating:** C

| Breakdown | Hype | Marketing | Up Against | Bottom Line |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adding stereo speakers aud o and v deo outputs and a headphone jack to their Cooling Station Nuby has created the Cool Rhythm. A dev ce with appea to gamers not currently running PlayStation audio through a stereo TV or entertain ment system, it offers a low-cost a ternative for "improved" sound | Word-of-mouth on the Coo. Rhythm will run pre dominantly ..cool .ts market .s much more lim ited than its speakerless s.bling the Cooling Station Moreover, very few publicat ons have actually reviewed it to date | Nuby plans to include the Cool Rhythm as part of a family ad in gaming mag- azines and, thus far, has focused its efforts on get ting reviews posted in the consumer press | None | Gamers, who a ready have their PlayStations connected to a stereo TV won't be happy with the audio quality this device affords Its noisy fan and tinny speakers add up to average sound at best Stock the Cool Rhythm in single units and recom- mend it only to those with monaura sets |

# Previews

[illegible] the pick of the litter [illegible] preview, we could be [illegible] the pick of the litter [illegible] release

## Software

### Shadow Man

***Platform:*** PC, PlayStation, Nintendo 64
***Publisher:*** Acclaim
***Developer:*** Iguana
***Available:*** Q3

Inspired by the Acclaim Comics/Valiant Heroes character of the same name, *Shadow Man* takes gamers to the very heart of darkness to confront unimaginable horrors in Acclaim's 3D action adventure. Set in the mysterious backdrop of Voodoo mythology, *Shadow Man* puts players in the role of Mike LeRoi, English Literature graduate now turned hired assassin, operating within the dark and seedy underworld of New Orleans. Using conventional and black magic weapons, Shadow Man walks between Liveside and Deadside worlds to wage war against a cabal of undead serial killers and legions of other worldly psychos.

*Shadow Man* is an action adventure game set up in a three-dimensional, third-person world. The player can take on the roles of both Mike and the Shadow Man within a variety of real-world and Deadside environments. The cool thing about *Shadow Man* is that the game will seem pretty simple and straightforward at first, but as the player progresses, the game slowly increases in complexity. There will be numerous paths to take and players will be exposed to more difficult challenges and shocking images. Acclaim is hoping that playing *Shadow Man* will make people think they are taking part in an action-thriller with a dark psychological subtext. Immersive adventure aspects feature complex puzzle solving involving The Texter and other mystical artifacts. Players are armed with an interesting array of conventional and black magic weapons—namely, 50 Desert Eagle, the Violator, the Shadowgun, the Flambeau, the Calabash, the Asson and many more.

Iguana, the developer behind hit games, like *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* and *NFL Quarterback Club* is once again pushing technology to the limit with *Shadow Man*. *Shadow Man's* state-of-the-art 3D VISTA (Virtually Integrated Scenic Terrain) game engine, utilizing Binary Space Partition technology, allows potentially limitless game environments that let the player see, often literally, as far as the horizon without the need for fog. *Shadow Man* will feature lush backgrounds and graphics that create haunting and realistic gaming environments. Softskin Technology allows for ultra-realistic facial structure and body features.

There will be over 40 cinematic cut scenes and a huge amount of pre-recorded speech (PC and PlayStation) that will be used to immerse the player further in the action. Look for *Shadow Man* to make a big splash at this year's E

## Software

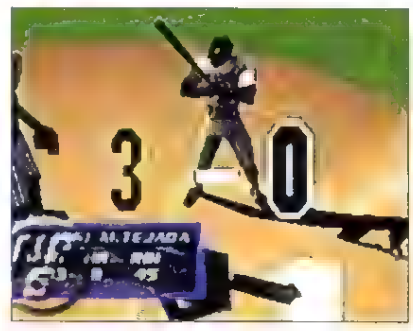
### Darkstone

***Platform:*** PC
***Publisher:*** Gath. of Developers
***Developer:*** Delphine Software
***Available:*** May

Developed by Delphine Software, the folks responsible for *Moto Racer* and *Fade to Black*, comes *Darkstone*, a 3D medieval, action role-playing game. *Darkstone* immerses players into an ancient world in pursuit of seven magical crystals to empower a magical orb. Players must attain this mystical object to defeat Draak, the evil dragon that is attempting to conquer the ancient land and annihilate the world's population. Players must venture into 32 unique dungeons, filled with puzzles and monsters, to reach their goal. Players will simultaneously control two heroes. There are over four different casts, with both males and females for a total of eight interchangeable characters.

## Software

### Ken Griffey's Slugfest



***Platform:*** N64
***Publisher:*** Nintendo
***Developer:*** Angel Studios
***Available:*** May

With fierce competition in the baseball category this year, Nintendo is hoping that *Ken Griffey's Slugfest* can surpass the others. *Slugfest* returns with better animation, high res graphics and plenty of other improvements on last year's best selling baseball game. The game will support the Expansion Pak for superior graphics, but even without the extra RAM, *Slugfest* will offer better resolution than the original N64 game. Enhancements that bring home that genuine ballpark feel include improved sound effects and player reactions. The AI has also been beefed up over last year's game. *Slugfest* will also feature all-new player create options, updated rosters, uniforms and stadiums.

## Software

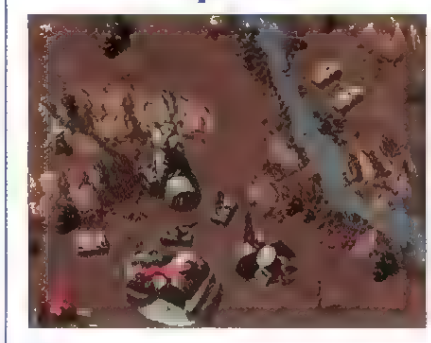
### WCW Mayhem

***Platform:*** N64, PlayStation
***Publisher:*** Electronic Arts
***Developer:*** Kodiak Interactive
***Available:*** Q4

Since obtaining the WCW license, Electronic Arts has finally revealed that it has been developing its first WCW licensed videogame for the past year and a half. Entitled *WCW Mayhem*, EA is hoping to take wrestling games to the next level. With major dollars going into marketing and production, WCW *Mayhem* is shaping up to be the most realistic and over-the-top wrestling game on the market. Over 60 big time stars of WCW will be in the game including Bam Bam Bigelow, Goldberg, Konnan, and Hollywood Hogan. In addition to all-out wrestling competition, *Mayhem* is going to have an actual plot. Although details are still under wraps, EA promises players will not be disappointed.

## Software

### Command and Conquer 64



***Platform:*** N64
***Publisher:*** Nintendo
***Developer:*** Looking Glass
***Available:*** June 28

After "conquering" the PC and PlayStation, the famed real-time strategy game, *Command and Conquer*, is finally coming to the Nintendo 64. *Command and Conquer 64* will be the first ever real-time strategy game for the system. The gameplay is virtually identical to the PC version. Players will build their base, harvest Tiberium and then attack their enemy. Since the game is essentially going to be a port of the PC version, most veteran gamers will feel right at home with this game. A definite plus for the game is RAM Pak support. Not only are the graphics going to be high res, each unit is going to be rendered in 3D as well. At this early stage, multi-player support is still in discussion.

# Can PC Titles Create a Viable Business Model with Virtual Retail Partners?

*By Paul Palumbo*

One of the most stunning (although not completely unexpected) statistics offered at the recent Game Developers Conference (GDC) was that over half of all PC titles released never achieve sales of 10,000 pieces. Sales at that level—even assuming a relatively lean R & D budget of $500,000/SKU—is a huge, negatively amortizing business (see table below) that no one can afford to stay in for very long. With sales of 10,000 pieces, a typical PC title is going to lose about $500,000+ dollars. Even assuming sales of 50,000 pieces, a PC title is not going to generate a meaningful return on investment (ROI), based on the current structure of the business.

Clearly, the current developer/publisher/wholesale/retail business model is not working for the vast majority of published product (save for the publishers owning 10% of titles that were mega-hits on the PC in 1998). The question is, Can anything be done about it? if so, *what*, *when* and *how*. First, by way of comparison, the statistics about PC game failure rates at retail should be put into perspective with other entertainment endeavors, from motion pictures to TV shows. How many TV show "pilots" ever make it in front of prime-time audiences, and of those that navigate through the network selection gauntlet, how many make it through the first year? The answer is "not many." How many music CDs are released every year (and just as quickly forgotten), and how many contain hit songs?

The game industry should stop wringing its hands about the failure rate of PC titles, and begin looking at ways to reduce the cost of failure—which is as natural as success—and maybe even drive more titles into profitability as a result. A good place to start is through a growing network of e-tailers, from Amazon.com to specialty software retailers on the web. The idea is to target reps responsible for interactive/online product inventory and dangle exclusives in front of them to build their own traffic as a distribution carrot. This is not aimed at changing peoples' orientation about playing games online either. This is a marketing exercise. While almost 60 million have Internet access either at home or at the office, it's true that only 10-25% of all game players with multi-player capability take advantage of it. Many use Internet for information gathering only. There is a fit. Buying a game online and having it delivered to the home is not asking anyone to do what they are not already doing.

**Retail Game Development and Payback Pro-Forma—*PC game***

| Self-publisher model | Year One Only | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Units Shipped and Sold* | *10,000* | *25,000* | *50,000* |
| Suggested Retail Price | $39.95 | $39.95 | $39.95 |
| Street Price | $32.99 | $32.99 | $32.99 |
| Retail Revenue | $329,900 | $824,750 | $1,649,500 |
| Wholesale Sell-in Price | $23.09 | $23.09 | $23.09 |
| Wholesale Revenue | $230,930 | $577,325 | $1,154,650 |
| Marketing/Sales | $125,000 | $125,000 | $125,000 |
| Development/R & D Costs | $500,000 | $500,000 | $500,000 |
| Returns Reserve | $46,186 | $115,465 | $230,930 |
| Packaging/Pressing | $30,000 | $62,500 | $125,000 |
| G & A | $34,640 | $86,599 | $173,198 |
| Total COGS | $735,826 | $889,564 | $1,154,128 |
| Title Contribution | ($504,896) | ($312,239) | $523 |
| Publisher Margin | (218.6%) | (54.1%) | 0.0% |

*Source: Paul A. Palumbo*

### INCREASING THE PROBABILITY OF RETAIL SUCCESS

The problem turns on how to increase the odds of success by altering business practices to adjust for the high rate of failure associated with the industry. The first place to begin is by forging a new relationship with retail and retailers, both mass merchants and specialty software stores. The idea is go "direct" to virtual retail (exclusively on the retailer's website), targeting software specialists initially with a web presence, and gradually introducing the concept to mass merchants. Publisher reps will conduct business as usual, and press the flesh with retail reps, but they won't be pitching for physical shelf space anymore.

Going direct to virtual retail solves too many problems immediately: the problem of a "returns reserve" and the shelf space crunch issue. The model has worked in the motion picture business. For example, some studios (mostly independent) go direct-to-retail on an exclusive basis with product. Some major studios (such as Disney) create more value with sequels (witness *Return to Jaffar*) by going direct-to-retail and bypassing theatrical distribution, which saves a lot of cash. It's time for the games business to look at a direct-to-retail business model which gives even the smaller guys an opportunity to forge relationship direct accounts that typically are owned by larger publishers on the boxed product side of the business.

**Direct to Retail Development and Payback Pro-Forma—*PC game***

| Self-publisher model | Year One Only | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Units Shipped and Sold* | *10,000* | *25,000* | *50,000* |
| Suggested Retail Price | $28.50 | $28.50 | $28.50 |
| Virtual Retail Price | $19.95 | $19.95 | $19.95 |
| Virtual Retail Revenue | $285,000 | $570,000 | $1,425,000 |
| Wholesale Revenue | $199,500 | $399,000 | $997,500 |
| Marketing/Sales | $125,000 | $125,000 | $125,000 |
| Development/R & D Costs | $500,000 | $500,000 | $500,000 |
| Returns Reserve | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| Jewel case/Packaging/ Pressing/Shipping | $30,000 | $50,000 | $125,000 |
| General and Administrative | $19,950 | $39,900 | $99,750 |
| Total COGS | $674,950 | $714,900 | $849,750 |
| Title Contribution | ($475,450) | ($315,900) | $147,750 |
| Publisher Margin | (238.3%) | (79.2%) | 14.8% |

*Source: Paul A. Palumbo*

### RETURNS RESERVE IS TOO EXPENSIVE, AND TIES UP PROFITS

Returns reserves make up anywhere from 20-30% of wholesale revenue, and with product sales of 20,000-50,000 pieces, it's simply too expensive and not an efficient use of capital. Many retailers are moving toward Just in Time (JIT) order fulfillment anyway to manage their operations, and so are publishers. Mattel, for example, is moving its production and distribution scheme toward JIT. Plus, incremental product shipment gives both publisher and retailer to make promotion a more year-round function, instead of the traditional one or two months concerted effort. In this case, fulfillment could be handled by the publisher upon receipt of an invoice from the retailer or website.

### SALES ARE STILL A FUNCTION OF PROMOTION

Title sales are a complex mix of street buzz, reviewers, promotion, marketing, MDF, publisher/developer legacies, etc. Promotion has always helped to sell games, and always will. But, what's the shortage in any campaign, whether on the Internet or print? It's promotional dollars and the sample audience/consumer traffic it drives. Recent research published by Ipsos-ASI (www.ipsos-asi.com) revealed that 40% of respondents who view static ad banners remember them, as compared to 41% for a 30-second TV spot. This is great news for PC publishers. Not many PC titles enjoy the awareness building muscle of a flight of TV spots backing them up, but maybe they don't have to pay the price of television to drive up the same level of awareness. "It depends on what you want people to do with the ad. If your only objective is to get people to remember the brand name, that's when you have a competitive situation with television," says Marianne Foley, Sr. VP of Ipsos. "If the objective is to communicate more of a message, then TV has an edge because it is more media rich. If the goal is to take a direct action, then the ping pong ball goes back to the Internet because there is a click opportunity."

Assuming $125,000 in sales and marketing cash (including the 50% of the budget allocated to MDF on a PC title), a publisher (or developer) could purchase the equivalent of 6.3 million ad impressions (at a $20 CPM). Even at a relatively low 1% purchase rate, the title could sell through some 62,500 pieces. And, the product could be given a greater level of visibility online that could never be achieved on a brick and mortar store shelf. The title and URL could be mentioned in retailer circulars and local print advertising, which is close to a zero cost incremental expense. Using local audiences to drive national awareness is a great model and takes advantage of the new "localism" power of the Internet.

Publishers, like EA, try to achieve a rate of return (pre-taxes) of about 15% on all development. Under the direct-to-virtual retail scenario (see above), sales of 50,000 pieces does result in an acceptable margin using that benchmark. The model is a lot more realistic for titles currently selling 10,000 pieces under the existing model than somehow expecting them to break through to the 100,000-piece level. But, it is realistic to shoot for a 50,000-piece sell through, and that's what hasn't been addressed in most organizations. The market continues to tell us there is demand for a wide variety of games, and that it's a matter of matching demand up with a proper production decision. As the business matures, however, it's also about matching up the correct distribution model and retail relationship with production decisions. There is a lot of opportunity to expand current business relationships and the way business is conducted. It's just a matter of when, not if. *GW*

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# PC GAMEPADS 8x

**All with Microsoft DIRECTX compliant driver software.**
**True 8 Button compatibility has arrived!**

**PC AVENGER PAD**
**JP278**

Power means nothing without control. The new PC Avenger from Logic 3 gives you that control! Dual Analog & Digital movement combined with 8 individual fire buttons, all with auto-fire. The PC Avenger is fully supported by the latest Windows 95/98 driver software. The software is Microsoft DIRECTX compliant and makes gamepad setup headaches a thing of the past.

- 8 Button dual Analog/microswitched Digital pad for the PC
- Complete with Windows 95/98 Custom Driver
- Analog throttle and control stick
- Dual speed turbo fire function

**PC INTRUDER PAD**
**JP269**

The PC Intruder gives added dimension to game control. Digital control and 8 button layout make this pad unstoppable and the special Logic 3 drivers mean the Raider's a pad built for punishment.

- 8 Digital pad for the PC
- Turbo fire function
- Complete with Windows 95/98 Custom Driver

**PC RAIDER PAD**
**JP270**

Nothing rocks like a Raider! Whether it's sports sims, beat'em ups or shoot 'em ups, the PC Raider takes them all on and wins! The fully microswitched 8 way 'D' pad gives maximum control with minimum stress and the Custom built Logic 3 drivers give you all the control you will ever need.

- 8 button Digital pad for the PC
- Dual speed turbo available on all fire button
- Microswitched 8 way directional control pad
- Complete with Windows 95/98 Custom Driver

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# Release Schedule

Logic 3

(513) 336-1370

## Game Boy Color

| Product Title | Manuf./ Publisher | Pre-Book Date | EST Ship Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| 40 Winks | GT Interactive | TBA | Q3 |
| Asteroids | Crave | TBA | Q2 |
| Barbie Ocean Discovery | Mattel Media | TBA | Q2 |
| Bass Fishing | Nintendo | 5/99 | 6/28/99 |
| CatZ | Mindscape | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| DogZ | Mindscape | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Chessmaster | Mindscape | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Dark Beast | Konami | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Defender/Joust | Midway | TBA | Q2 |
| Deer Hunter | Vatica | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Disney's Tarzan | Activision | TBA | Q2 |
| Duke Nukem | GT Interactive | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Griffey's Slugfest | Nintendo | 4/99 | 5/10/99 |
| Int'l Track & Field | Konami | 7/99 | 6/99 |
| Kaistar | Infogrames | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Mario Golf | Nintendo | TBA | Q3 |
| Mission Impossible | Infogrames | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Motocross Maniacs | Konami | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Pokemon Pinball | Nintendo | 4/99 | 5/10/99 |
| Pokemon Yellow | Nintendo | TBA | Q4 |
| Prince of Persia | Mindscape | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| R-Type DX | Nintendo | 5/99 | 6/28/99 |
| Revelations: D.S | Atlus | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Roadsters '99 | Titus | TBA | Q4 |
| Rugrats Movie | THQ | TBA | Q2 |
| San Francisco Rush | Midway | TBA | Q2 |
| Smurfs Nightmare | Infogrames | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Space Station: Silicon Vly | Take 2 | TBA | Q2 |
| Spawn | Konami | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Spy Hunter/Moon Patrol | Midway | TBA | Q2 |
| Super Mario Bros. | Nintendo | 4/99 | 5/10/99 |
| Survival Kids | Konami | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Tom & Jerry | Majesco | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Wild Genie 8 | Vatical | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Xena & Hercules | Titus | TBA | Q4 |
| Yars Revenge | Activision | TBA | Q3 |
| Zebco Fishing | Vatical | 5/99 | 6/99 |

## Macintosh

| Product Title | Manuf./ Publisher | Pre-Book Date | EST Ship Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age of Empires | MacSoft | TBA | Q2 |
| Aliens vs. Predator | Logicware | TBA | Q3 |
| Aquazone Deluxe | Mindscape | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Battlezone | Logicware | TBA | Q3 |
| Caesar 3 | Sierra | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| CatZ | Mindscape | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Carmageddon 2 | SC | TBA | Q2 |
| Civilization II Gold | MacSoft | TBA | Q2 |
| Deer Avenger | Simon & Schus | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Falcon 4.0 | MacSoft | TBA | Q2 |
| FLYI | Gathering of Dev. | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Fox Arcade Pinball | Fox Interactive | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Heretic II | Logicware | TBA | Q3 |
| Interstate '76 | Logicware | TBA | Q4 |
| Quake II | id/Logicware | 5/99 | 6/2/99 |
| Space Girl | Titus | TBA | Q2 |
| StarCraft: Brood Wars | Blizzard | TBA | Q2 |
| Star Trek: Birth of t. Fed. | MacSoft | TBA | Q2 |
| Tanaka | Pacific Media | TBA | Q2 |
| Tomb Raider Gold | Aspyr Media | TBA | Q2 |
| Total Annihilation | MacSoft | TBA | Q2 |
| TZAR | Haemimont | TBA | Q2 |
| Zork: Grand Inquisitor | Logicware | TBA | Q2 |

## Nintendo 64

| Product Title | Manuf./ Publisher | Pre-Book Date | EST Ship Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| A Bug's Life | Activision | TBA | Q3 |
| All Star Tennis '99 | Ubi Soft | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Armorines | Acclaim | TBA | Q3 |
| Army Men: SH | 3DO | TBA | Q4 |
| Asteroids | Crave | TBA | Q2 |
| Bass Masters Classic | THQ | TBA | Q4 |
| Battlezone | Crave | TBA | Q4 |
| Blues Brothers 2000 | Titus | TBA | Q4 |
| Caesar's Palace | Crave | TBA | Q2 |
| Carmageddon 64 | Interplay | TBA | Q3 |
| Command & Conquer | Nintendo | 5/99 | 6/28/99 |
| Deer Hunter | Vatical | TBA | Q2 |
| Donkey Kong 64 | Nintendo | 10/98 | 11/99 |
| Duke Nukem:Zero Hour | GT Interactive | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Earthbound 64 | Nintendo | TBA | Q4 |
| F1 World Grand Prix 2 | Nintendo | TBA | 8/99 |
| Gauntlet Legends | Midway | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Gex 3: D.C. Gecko | Eidos Interactive | TBA | Q3 |
| Goemon's Great Adv. | Konami | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Grand Theft Auto | Rockstar | TBA | Q4 |
| Griffey's Slugfest | Nintendo | 4/99 | 5/10/99 |
| Harvest Moon 64 | Natsume | TBA | Q2 |
| Hercules | Titus | TBA | Q4 |
| Hybrid Heaven | Konami | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Hydro Thunder | Midway | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| Hyper Bike | Kemco | TBA | Q3 |
| In-Fisherman Bass Hntr | Take 2 | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Jeff Gordon Racing | ASC Games | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Jet Force Gemini | Nintendo/Rare | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Jungle Bots | Titus | TBA | Q2 |
| Kobe Bryant Courtside 2 | Nintendo | TBA | Q4 |
| Legend of the River King | Natsume | TBA | Q2 |
| Lego Racers | Lego Media | TBA | Q3 |
| Looney Tunes: Spce Rce | Infogrames | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Mario Golf | Nintendo | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Monaco GP | Ubi Soft | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Monster Truck Madness | Take 2 | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Mortal Kombat: S.F. | Midway | TBA | Q3 |
| NBA Jam 2000 | Acclaim | 10/99 | 11/99 |
| NFL Blitz 2000 | Midway | TBA | Q3 |
| Nomenquest | THQ | TBA | Q4 |
| Nuclear Strike | THQ | TBA | Q2 |
| Ogre Battle 3 | Nintendo | TBA | Q3 |
| Paperboy | Midway | TBA | Q4 |
| Perfect Dark | Nintendo/Rare | TBA | Q4 |
| Playmobil | Ubi Soft | TBA | Q2 |
| Pokemon Snap | Nintendo | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Quake II | Activision | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Quest for Camelot | Titus | TBA | Q3 |
| Rainbow Six | Red Storm | TBA | Q3 |
| Rat Attack | Mindscape Ent. | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Rayman II | Ubi Soft | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Ready 2 Rumble | Midway | TBA | Q3 |
| Resident Evil 2 | Capcom | TBA | Q4 |
| Re-Volt | Acclaim | TBA | Q2 |
| Road Rash 3D | THQ | TBA | Q3 |
| Roadsters '99 | Titus | TBA | Q4 |
| Rugrats Board Game | THQ | TBA | Q2 |
| Shadowgate 64 | Vatical | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Shadow Man | Acclaim | TBA | Q3 |
| Spider Man | Activision | TBA | Q3 |
| StarCraft | Nintendo | TBA | Q2 |
| Starshot | Infogrames | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Star Wars E1: Racer | Nintendo | 4/99 | 5/27/99 |
| Star Wars: PM | Nintendo | TBA | Q4 |
| Superman | Titus | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Super Smash Bros | Nintendo | 3/99 | 4/28/99 |
| The New Tetris | Nintendo | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Tonic Trouble | Ubi Soft | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Twelve Tales: Conker 64 | Nintendo/Rare | TBA | Q3 |
| Quake II | Activision | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| V-Rally | Infogrames | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Wild Metal Country | Gremlin | TBA | Q3 |
| WinBack | Koei | TBA | Q3 |
| World Driver Champ. | Midway | TBA | Q2 |
| WWF Attitude | Acclaim | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| X-Men | Activision | TBA | Q4 |
| Xena: Warrior Princess | Titus | TBA | Q4 |

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## PC

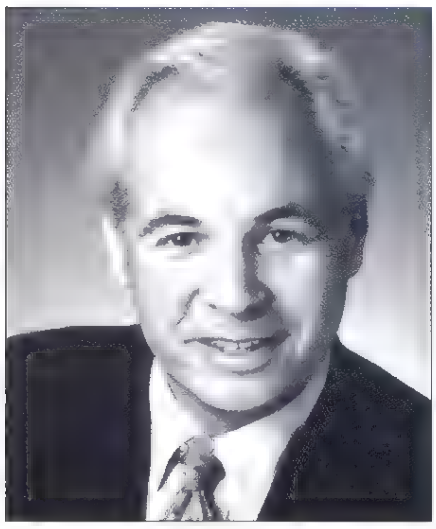
| Product Title | Manuf./ Publisher | Pre-Book Date | EST Ship Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| 20,000 Leagues | SouthPeak | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| A-10 Warthog | Electronic Arts | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Age of Empires II | Microsoft | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Allegiance | Microsoft | TBA | Q4 |
| All Star Baseball 2000 | Acclaim | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Alien Resurrection | Fox Interactive | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Amen | GT Interactive | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Anachronox | Eidos | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Aquazone Deluxe | Mindscape | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Armorines | Acclaim | TBA | Q3 |
| Babylon 5 | Sierra | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Babyz | Mindscape Ent | 10/99 | 11/99 |
| Baldur's Gate Add-on | Interplay | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Barbie Tattoos | Mattel | TBA | Q2 |
| Barbie Ultra Sports | Mattel | TBA | Q2 |
| Barbie Gotta Groove | Matte | TBA | Q4 |
| Baseball Pro 99 | Sierra Sports | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| Battlezone II | Activision | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Beneath | Activision | TBA | Q2 |
| Black & White | Electronic Arts | TBA | Q3 |
| Blue's 123 | Humongous | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Brunswick Bowling 2 | THQ | TBA | Q4 |
| CatZ 4 | Mindscape Ent. | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Chessmaster 7000 | Mindscape Ent. | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Civil War Experience | SouthPeak | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Clan Wars | Gremlin | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| C & C Tiberian Sun | Electronic Arts | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Confirmed Kill | Eidos | TBA | Q3 |
| Conquest: FW | Microsoft | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Counter Strike | Infogrames | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Creatures 3 | Mindscape Ent | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| Creatures Adventures | Mindscape Ent. | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Croc | Fox Interactive | TBA | Q2 |
| Curse Your Red Baron | Sierra | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Dakatana | Eidos | TBA | Q3 |
| Dark Reign 2 | Activision | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Darkstone | Take 2 | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Dead Unity | THQ | TBA | Q2 |
| Deus Ex | Eidos | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Diablo 2 | Sierra | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Dragon | Microsoft | TBA | Q4 |
| Drakan: Order of Flame | Psygnosis | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Driver | GT Interactive | 6/99 | 7/8/99 |
| DogZ 4 | Mindscape | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Duke Nukem Forever | GT Interactive | TBA | Q3 |
| Dungeon Keeper 2 | Electronic Arts | TBA | Q3 |
| Elysium | GT Interactive | TBA | Q4 |
| F-18 Super Hornet | Titus | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Falcon 4.0 Add-On | MicroProse | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Fighter Duel 2.0 | Infogrames | TBA | Q2 |
| Fighting Steel | Mindscape Ent | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Flanker 2.0 | Mindscape Ent. | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Flash Point | Red Storm | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Fleet Command | Electronic Arts | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Flight Unlimited 3 | Electronic Arts | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| FLY! | Gathering of Dev. | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Force 21 | Red Storm | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Full Auto | Microsoft | TBA | Q4 |
| GEX 3 | Eidos | 4/99 | 4/99 |
| Giants | Interplay | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Golf with Johnny Miller | Access Software | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Gunship 3 | MicroProse | TBA | Q3 |
| Half Life: Team Fortress | Sierra | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| Heavy Gear II | Activision | 3/99 | 4/27/99 |
| Hello Kitty Cube Frenzy | NewKidCo | TBA | Q2 |
| Hired Guns | Psygnosis | TBA | Q2 |
| Hot Wheels Crash | Mattel | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Indiana Jones & I.M. | LucasArts | TBA | Q3 |
| Intl. Rally Championship | THQ | TBA | Q3 |
| Inertia | Microsoft | TBA | Q4 |
| Interstate '82 | Activision | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Jeff Gordon Racing | ASC Games | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Kingpin | Interplay | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| KISS: Psycho Circus | G.O.D. | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Legacy of Kain | Eidos | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Lego Friends | Lego Media | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Lego and Classic | Lego Media | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Lego Racers | Lego Media | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Lego Rock Raiders | Lego Media | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Le Mans | Infogrames | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Links Extreme Vol. 1 | Access | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Majesty | Ripcord | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Maisy | Simon & Schus | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Matchbox Hard Hat | Mattel | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Max Payne | Gathering of Dev. | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Mechwarrior 3 | MicroProse | TBA | Q2 |
| Messiah | Interplay | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Metal Fatigue | Psygnosis | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Microsoft Football | Microsoft | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Midtown Madness | Microsoft | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Might & Magic V | 3DO | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Missile Command 3D | Hasbro | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Mission Impossible | Infogrames | TBA | Q3 |
| Mordor 2 | Interplay | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Mortyr | Magic | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Myst Collector's Ed | Mindscape Ent | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Navy SEALS | Sierra | TBA | Q4 |
| NASCAR Road Racing | EA Sports | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| NASCAR Racing 3 | Sierra | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| NBA Drive 2000 | Microsoft | TBA | Q4 |
| Nocturne | Gathering of Dev. | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| Nox | Electronic Arts | TBA | Q3 |
| Odium | Monolith | TBA | Q4 |
| Omikron: Nomad Soul | Eidos | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| On | Bungie | TBA | Q2 |
| Outcast | Infogrames | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Panzer General 3 | Mindscape Ent | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Pern: Dragonflight | Grolier Interactive | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Pharoah | Sierra Studios | TBA | Q3 |
| Planescape: Torment | Interplay | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Prey | GT Interactive | TBA | 3/2000 |
| Prince Of Persia 3D | Mindscape Ent. | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Q*bert 3D | Hasbro | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Quake 3 Arena | Activision | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Quest/Glory Expansion | Sierra | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Rayman 2 | Ubi Soft | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| Revenant | Eidos | 7/99 | 8/99 |
| Re-Volt | Acclaim | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Road Wars | Intense Ent | 4/99 | 5/2/99 |
| Sanity | Monolith | TBA | Q4 |
| Sega Rally 2 | Sega | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Septerra Core | Monolith | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| Seven Kingdoms II | Interactive Magic | TBA | Q4 |
| ShadowMan | Acclaim | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Shadowpact | Blue Byte | TBA | Q4 |
| Silent Hunter II | Mindscape Ent. | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Silver | Infogrames | TBA | Q3 |
| Sinistar Unleashed | THQ | TBA | Q3 |
| Soldier | SouthPeak | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Space Girl | Titus | TBA | Q3 |
| Starlancer | Microsoft | TBA | Q4 |
| Starshot | Infogrames | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| StarTrek: Birth/Federatn | MicroProse | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| StarTrek Creator AO | Simon & Schus. | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Star Trek Klingon Acad | Interplay | TBA | Q2 |
| Star Trek New Worlds | Interplay | TBA | Q3 |
| StarTrek: Starfleet Com | Interplay | 10/99 | 11/99 |
| Star Wars: Pod Racer | LucasArts | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Star Wars: Episode 1 | LucasArts | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| SW: Force Commander | LucasArts | TBA | Q4 |
| Super Bike 2 | Intense Entert. | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| SU-25 | Mindscape Ent. | 10/99 | 11/99 |
| Tank Racer | Grolier Int. | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Tenchu | Activision | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| The Next Tetris | Hasbro | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Tomb Raider 2 Gold | Eidos | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Tonic Trouble | Ubi Soft | TBA | Q2 |
| Total Annih. Kingdoms | GT Interactive | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Total Annihilation 2 | GT Interactive | TBA | Q3 |
| Ultima Ascension | Electronic Arts | TBA | Q3 |
| Ultra RC Racing | Sierra | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| Unreal Add-on | GT Interactive | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Urban Chaos | Eidos | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Velocity | Acclaim | TBA | Q4 |
| Virtual Deep Sea Fishing | Interplay | TBA | Q2 |
| Wall Street Tycoon | Interactive Magic | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Warcraft 2 Platinum | Sierra | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Warcraft 3 | Sierra | 10/99 | 11/99 |
| Warhammer: Rites/War | Mindscape Ent. | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Warlords IV | Mindscape Ent. | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| Werewolf The Apoc | ASC Games | 11/99 | 12/99 |
| Wheel of Time | GT Interactive | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Wild Metal Country | Gremlin | TBA | Q3 |
| Wild Wild West | SouthPeak | TBA | Q4 |
| World Champ. Soccer | Microsoft | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Worldcraft Pro | Sierra | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| X-Com Alliance | MicroProse | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| YOOT Tower | SegaSoft | 3/99 | 4/27/99 |

## PlayStation

| Product Title | Manuf./ Publisher | Pre-Book Date | EST Ship Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ace Combat 3 | Namco | TBA | Q3 |
| Age of Empires | Psygnosis | TBA | Q2 |
| Alien Resurrection | Fox Interactive | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| All-Star Tennis '99 | Ubi Soft | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Ape Escape | Sony | TBA | Q3 |
| Atlantis | Infogrames | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Bass Landing | Agetec | TBA | Q3 |
| Bass Mastrs Tourn Edit | THQ | TBA | Q4 |
| Beavis and Butthead | GT Interactive | TBA | Q4 |
| Broken Sword | Atlus | TBA | Q3 |
| Brunswick Bowling 2 | THQ | TBA | Q4 |
| Cabelas Big Game PS | Vatical | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Centipede | Hasbro Int. | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Chessmaster Millenium | Mindscape Ent. | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Clock Tower 2 | Ascii | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Croc 2 | Fox Interactive | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Crusaders of M&M | 3DO | TBA | Q2 |
| Danger Girl | THQ | TBA | Q3 |
| Demolition Racer | Accolade | TBA | Q4 |
| Dabotta Adventure of Tobu | 989 Studios | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Dino Crisis | Capcom | TBA | Q3 |
| DUKE IT | FunCom | TBA | Q3 |
| Dreams | Infogrames | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Driver | GT Interactive | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Echo Night | Agetec | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Ehrgeiz | SquareEA | TBA | Q3 |
| Elmo's Number Journey | NewKidCo | TBA | Q2 |
| Elmo's Letter Adv | NewKidCo | TBA | Q2 |
| Evil Zone | Titus | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Fighter Maker | Agetec | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Final Fantasy Anthology | SquareEA | TBA | Q3 |
| Final Fantasy VI | SquareEA | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Gauntlet Legends | Midway | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko | Eidos Interactive | TBA | 5/99 |
| Grand Theft Auto '69 | Take 2 | 9/99 | 10/99 |
| Gran Turismo 2 | Sony | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Guardian Legends | Activision | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Gungage | Konami | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Iron Soldier 3 | Vatical | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Jackie Chan's Stunt. | Midway | TBA | Q3 |
| Jade Cocoon | Crave | TBA | Q3 |
| Jeff Gordon Racing | ASC Games | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| JM Supercross 2000 | Acclaim | TBA | Q3 |
| Kiss: Psycho Circus | Rockstar | 10/99 | 11/99 |
| Klingon Academy | Interplay | TBA | Q1 |
| Knockout Kings 2 | EA Sports | TBA | Q3 |
| Legacy of Kain | Eidos | 4/99 | 6/99 |
| Lego Racers | Lego Media | TBA | Q3 |
| Lego Rock Raiders | Lego Media | TBA | Q3 |
| Le Mans | Infogrames | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Looney Tunes: LiT | Infogrames | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Lufia II | Natsume | TBA | Q4 |
| Mission: Impossible | Infogrames | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Missile Command 3D | Hasbro | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Mortal Kombat S.F. | Midway | TBA | Q3 |
| NBA Shootout 2000 | 989 Studios | TBA | Q4 |
| NBA Showtime | Midway | TBA | Q4 |
| NFL Xtreme 2 | 989 Studios | TBA | Q4 |
| Panzer General | Mindscape Ent | 8/99 | 9/99 |
| Quake II | Activision | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| R Types Delta | Agetec | TBA | Q3 |
| Railroad Tycoon II | Take 2 | TBA | Q4 |
| Rally Racing | Konami | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Rat Attack | Mindscape Ent. | 6/99 | 7/99 |
| Rayman 2 | Ubi Soft | TBA | Q3 |
| RC Stunt Copter | Midway | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Ready 2 Rumble | Midway | TBA | Q4 |
| Rising Zan | Agetec | TBA | Q4 |
| Saboteur | Eidos | TBA | Q3 |
| Shadow Tower | Agetec | TBA | Q4 |
| Shao Lin | THQ | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Silhouette Mirage | Working Designs | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Soul of the Samurai | Konami | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Spec Ops | Take 2 | TBA | Q4 |
| Spider-Man | Activision | TBA | Q3 |
| Star Wars: Episode One | LucasArts | TBA | 5/20/99 |
| Street Fighter Alpha 3 | Capcom | 3/99 | 4/99 |
| Suikoden 2 | Konami | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Superman | Titus | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| The Next Tetris | Hasbro | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Thousand Arms | Atlus | TBA | Q2 |
| Thrasher | Rockstar | 10/99 | 11/99 |
| Tiger Woods Golf 2000 | EA Sports | TBA | Q4 |
| Tomorrow Never Dies | MGM Interactive | TBA | Q3 |
| Toonenstein | Vatical | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Tony Hawk's Pro Skater | Activision | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| Velocity | Acclaim | TBA | Q4 |
| Vermin | Eidos | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Virus | Infogrames | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| WCW Mayhem | EA Sports | TBA | Q4 |
| Wild,Wild West | SouthPeak | TBA | Q4 |
| Wipeout 3 | Psygnosis | TBA | Q4 |
| WWF Attitude | Acclaim | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| Xena Warrior Princess | 989 Studios | 5/99 | 6/99 |
| X Files Game | Fox Interactive | 4/99 | 5/99 |
| X-Men | Activision | TBA | Q3 |

***Manufacturers: If you have found that your company's products are improperly listed, are not listed, or are in need of updating, please ask your sales or PR department to send all relevant information to CyberACTIVE Media Group, Inc., GameWEEK, 64 Danbury Road, Wilton, CT. 06897-4406 USA or fax your weekly updates to 203.761.6184. Questions regarding this section may be directed to Ben Rinaldi at 203.761.6158, ben@gameweek.com. Media: Permission to reprint GameWEEK Release Schedule in consumer-oriented enthusiast publications or mass media not dealing primarily in the interactive entertainment industry is granted provided appropriate credit is given.***

# GameWEEK Interview:



## Fox Interactive's

# Jon Richmond

*Making the transition from Hollywood to electronic entertainment*

*By Marc Dultz*

*When it comes to establishing brand equity and reaching critical mass, many game publishers have turned to popular intellectual properties to help drive their business. The theory is that it's easier to leverage a highly recognizable license than it is to create a wholly original concept. The results, as you might imagine, speak for themselves, with everything from* Star Wars *to* Independence Day, *from* Johnny Mnemonic *to* The Lost World *making the transition from the silver screen to the gaming platform.*

Several years ago, after realizing the full potential of some of its branded media properties, the Fox Filmed Entertainment Group created the Fox Interactive division—a separate business unit whose strategic goal was to take some of its most well-known film and television properties and translate them to the interactive entertainment format. For the better part of four years now, Fox Interactive has done just that, releasing a bevy of products that has not only earned it the adoration of the gaming community but the respect of the retail community. Most importantly, Fox Interactive has become one of only two media-based companies to have survived the so-called "media blitz" of the early '90s, a phenomenon that hasn't escaped the attention of industry analysts.

Recently, *GameWEEK* was fortunate enough to catch up with Jon Richmond, president of Fox Interactive. In our exclusive interview, Jon not only explains how his operating unit managed to survive the media invasion, but also how it has gone on to become one of the leading publishers of brand-driven products.

***GameWEEK:** Jon, would you mind discussing your background, role and responsibilities at Fox Interactive?*

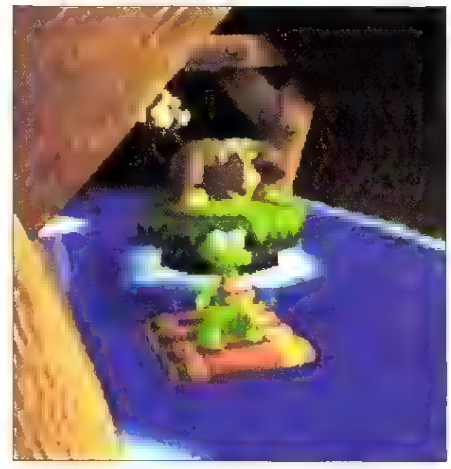
***Jon Richmond:*** Before joining Fox, I was at Disney for 10 years, last serving as Senior Vice President of Walt Disney Attractions, helping to rescue a certain troubled European theme park.

Currently, as president of Fox Interactive, I oversee the team responsible for the development, design and conceptual creation of the entire product line, as well as the marketing, sales and publication of those products.

***GW:** I would imagine that when the Fox Filmed Entertainment group announced the formation of the Fox Interactive unit, the newly formed division met with some initial skepticism by both the gaming and retailing community. How have you managed to convince both groups that you're indeed "in it for the long haul?"*

***JR:*** It's very true, we did meet with some skepticism partly because so many of our brethren media companies had jumped into this business with all four feet. I dare say that in most cases, they suffered terribly from it.

On the whole, we benefited from our delayed entry because we were able to watch the other studios struggle and learn from their mistakes. Ultimately, we were able to convince both the gaming and retail community that we were very serious because we approached the industry as a games business, not as a licensing or "license-slapping" business. From the start, we have always considered the great gaming companies as our primary competitors, not the other media companies or motion picture studios.



**Croc 2 *is due out around June of this year.***

***GW:** Most of the major media conglomerates that entered the interactive entertainment market several years ago have since pulled up stakes, unable to turn a profit after sinking huge sums of money in the industry. Where do you think most of these companies went wrong, and why do you believe Fox Interactive has managed to beat the odds?*

***JR:*** I think there are two principal reasons that led to the demise of these other companies. The first, of course, is market-related, while the second has to do with the approach they took to the business.

In the first half of this decade, there was a lot of hype surrounding the CD-ROM market for entertainment properties on the personal computer. I believe that led most of the major media companies to jump into the marketplace without much preparation, using a strategy that didn't pan out. We were fortunate, partly from a timing standpoint, because when we entered the marketplace, we realized there were not only a relatively modest market for PC-based software, but also a huge potential market on the next-generation consoles. Because we began this company in late '95, we were able to benefit from the console manufacturers' huge dominance of the market that took place over the last four years.

As I alluded earlier, other media companies' approach to the market emphasized licensing and merchandising over creativity. In other words, they viewed the computer software market not unlike the way they viewed the video, book or merchandising market. They believed they could take their properties and convert them rather easily into these new mediums, in much the same manner they had done so successfully with video, where the underlying property sells the product. Unfortunately, that doesn't work, because unlike video or some of the other ancillary markets, the game market is creative from the very start. At Fox, instead of assuming that the property would sell the product, we began with the belief that the product needed to sell itself and that th property was an assist or a crutch that would help to heighten consumer awareness

We began to develop product from the ground up, and were rather careful about how we brought some of our properties to market. We also began to create original properties for the gaming market, and I think that ultimately allowed us to succeed where others failed.

***GW:** Up until recently, Fox Sports had been working in conjunction with Gremlin Interactive to produce a variety of sports-related games. I understand that you've since changed that strategy and have now established a partnering relationship with several different third-party developers, including Radical Entertainment and Farsight Studios. Why the sudden shift in strategy, and what does it mean for the average sports enthusiast?*

***JR:*** I don't think it's a sudden shift in strategy. I think it's a progression as we enter the sports arena. The agreement and arrangement that Fox Sports Interactive had with Gremlin allowed us to get into the sports business and "dip our toe" into the marketplace. That worked very well for us, and we consider it to have been a successful launch. As we then grew and as we began to grow the offerings of Fox Sports Interactive—as

# Market Tracking Reports

NPD

## Top 10 Best Selling Video Game Titles

*Based on Items Introduced in 1999 Only*
*March, 1999—Weeks One & Two (2/28-3/13)*

| RANK | PLATFORM | TITLE | PUBLISHER | RELEASE DATE | AVG. RETAIL PRICE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | PSX | Syphon Filter | 989 Studios | Feb '99 | $41 |
| 2 | N64 | Mario Party | Nintendo of America | Feb '99 | $50 |
| 3 | PSX | Silent Hill | Konami | Feb '99 | $45 |
| 4 | PSX | WCW/nWo Thunder | THQ | Jan '99 | $41 |
| 5 | PSX | Street Sk8er | Electronic Arts | Feb '99 | $41 |
| 6 | PSX | Fisherman's Bait | Konami | Feb '99 | $41 |
| 7 | GBC | Wario Land 2 | Nintendo of America | Jan '99 | $28 |
| 8 | PSX | Marvel vs. Street Fighter | Capcom | Feb '99 | $38 |
| 9 | N64 | Castlevania | Konami | Jan '99 | $51 |
| 10 | N64 | WCW Nitro | THQ | Feb '99 | $51 |

*Source NPD TRSTS Video Games Service • 516.625.2345*

## Top 10 Nintendo 64 Games

*Ranked on Units Sold—March, 1999*
*Weeks One & Two (2/28-3/13)*

| RANK | TITLE | PUBLISHER | RELEASE DATE | AVERAGE RETAIL PRICE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Mario Party | Nintendo of America | Feb '99 | $50 |
| 2 | Legend of Zelda Oot | Nintendo of America | Nov '98 | $60 |
| 3 | GoldenEye 007 | Nintendo of America | Aug '97 | $40 |
| 4 | SW: Rogue Squadron | LucasArts | Dec '98 | $50 |
| 5 | Mario Kart 64 | Nintendo of America | Feb '97 | $40 |
| 6 | Super Mario 64 | Nintendo of America | Sep '96 | $40 |
| 7 | WCW/nWo Revenge | THQ | Oct '98 | $51 |
| 8 | South Park | Acclaim | Dec '98 | $60 |
| 9 | Nascar 99 | Electronic Arts | Sep '98 | $40 |
| 10 | Castlevania | Konami | Jan '99 | $51 |

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## Top 10 Sony PlayStation Games

*Ranked on Units Sold—March, 1999*
*Weeks One & Two (2/28-3/13)*

| RANK | TITLE | PUBLISHER | RELEASE DATE | AVERAGE RETAIL PRICE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Syphon Filter | 989 Studios | Feb '99 | $41 |
| 2 | Silent Hill | Konami | Feb '99 | $45 |
| 3 | Frogger | Hasbro Interactive | Oct '97 | $20 |
| 4 | Gran Turismo Racing | Sony Computer Ent. | May '98 | $41 |
| 5 | Metal Gear Solid | Konami | Oct '98 | $47 |
| 6 | Crash Bandicoot 2 | Sony Computer Ent. | Oct '97 | $20 |
| 7 | Rugrats | THQ | Nov '98 | $41 |
| 8 | WCW/nWo Thunder | THQ | Jan '99 | $41 |
| 9 | NBA Live 99 | Electronic Arts | Nov '98 | $41 |
| 10 | Spyro The Dragon | Sony Computer Ent. | Sep '98 | $40 |

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## Game Quality/Value Rank by Publisher

**Q:** Which company do you think produces the best high quality games?
**Q:** Which company do you think produces the most fairly priced games?

Shown above is a list of publishers ranked by the respondents for quality and value priced games. In the fourth column, an index combines the two responses into one score in order to illustrate the overall rank of the publisher.

The index is derived by multiplying the second and third columns. It reflects the "impact" of each publisher's games on the respondents.

Sierra has the highest index score which indicates that it has the highest quality/most fairly priced games.

The above information was taken from the Gaming 2001 Report, a multi-client study of consumers that focuses on the future of the gaming market developed and performed by Fairfield Research. The Gaming 2001 Report is sponsored by *GameWEEK* Magazine and CIBC Oppenheimer and was developed with input from the key companies who develop or manufacture game hardware and software. For more information regarding the Gaming 2001 Report contact Fairfield Research, Inc., 5815 South 58th, Lincoln NE 68516. 402 441 3370. www.cybersurvey.com

## Top 25 Video Games

*Ranked on Units Sold—March, 1999*
*Weeks One & Two (2/28-3/13)*

| RANK | PLATFORM | TITLE | PUBLISHER | RELEASE DATE | AVG. RETAIL PRICE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | PSX | Syphon Filter | 989 Studios | Feb '99 | $41 |
| 2 | N64 | Mario Party | Nintendo of America | Feb '99 | $50 |
| 3 | GBOY | Pokemon Blue | Nintendo of America | Sep '98 | $29 |
| 4 | GBOY | Pokemon Red | Nintendo of America | Sep '98 | $30 |
| 5 | PSX | Silent Hill | Konami | Feb '99 | $45 |
| 6 | PSX | Frogger | Hasbro Interactive | Oct '97 | $20 |
| 7 | N64 | Legend of Zelda: Oot | Nintendo of America | Nov '98 | $60 |
| 8 | N64 | GoldenEye 007 | Nintendo of America | Aug '97 | $40 |
| 9 | PSX | Gran Turismo Racing | Sony Computer Ent. | May '98 | $41 |
| 10 | PSX | Metal Gear Solid | Konami | Oct '98 | $47 |
| 11 | PSX | Crash Bandicoot 2 | Sony Computer Ent | Oct '97 | $20 |
| 12 | PSX | Rugrats | THQ | Nov '98 | $41 |
| 13 | PSX | WCW/nWo Thunder | THQ | Jan '99 | $41 |
| 14 | PSX | NBA Live 99 | Electronic Arts | Nov '98 | $41 |
| 15 | N64 | SW: Rogue Squadron | LucasArts | Dec '98 | $50 |
| 16 | PSX | Spyro the Dragon | Sony Computer Ent | Sep '98 | $40 |
| 17 | PSX | Crash Bandicoot Warp | Sony Computer Ent | Nov '98 | $40 |
| 18 | PSX | WCW Nitro | THQ | Jan '98 | $20 |
| 19 | N64 | Mario Kart 64 | Nintendo of America | Feb '97 | $40 |
| 20 | N64 | Super Mario 64 | Nintendo of America | Sep '96 | $40 |
| 21 | PSX | Tetris Plus | Jaleco | Oct '96 | $20 |
| 22 | PSX | Street Sk8er | Electronic Arts | Feb '99 | $41 |
| 23 | GBC | Zelda: Link's Awakening | Nintendo of America | Dec '98 | $29 |
| 24 | PSX | Cool Boarders 2 | Sony Computer Ent. | Nov '97 | $20 |
| 25 | N64 | WCW/nWo Revenge | THQ | Oct '98 | $51 |

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# Stock Index

*Visit www.gamedaily.com for the latest information and stock index quotes.*

## Publishers/Manufacturers

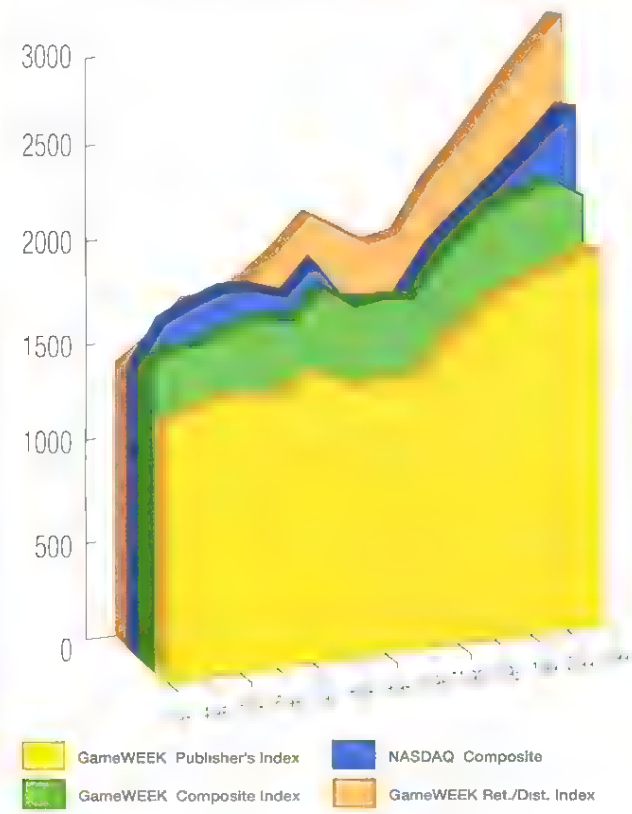
| EXCH | TICKER | COMPANY | 52-WEEK HIGH | 52-WEEK LOW | P/E RATIO | 3/26/99 CLOSE | 4/1/99 CLOSE | % CHANGE IN PERIOD | % CHANGE IN YEAR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NASD | TDDDF | 3D Labs Inc Ltd | 26 12 | 2.25 | | 3 38 | 3 13 | -7.41% | 10.71% |
| NASD | TDFX | 3Dfx | 35.25 | 8.00 | 10.0 | 11 50 | 13 25 | 15.22% | -4.95% |
| NASD | THDO | 3DO | 7.50 | 1 87 | | 5 66 | 5 50 | -2 76% | -14.29% |
| NASD | AKLM | Acclaim | 13 00 | 4.50 | 23.4 | 8 00 | 8.88 | 10.94% | -27 55% |
| NASD | ATVI | Activision | 14.87 | 8.75 | 25 6 | 11 56 | 12 56 | 8 65% | 12 92% |
| NASD | ADRN | Adrenalin Interactive Inc New | 11 25 | 0.50 | | 3 13 | 4.19 | 34.00% | 103.03% |
| NYSE | AMD | Advanced Micro Devices Inc | 33 00 | 9 31 | | 16 00 | 15 63 | -2 34% | -46.12% |
| NASD | AAPL | Apple Computer | 47 31 | 24 68 | 13.3 | 33 25 | 36 06 | 8 46% | 11 91% |
| NYSE | BDE | Brilliant Digital Enmt Inc | 5 25 | 1 06 | | 2 38 | 2 75 | 15.79% | 57 14% |
| NYSE | CRUS | Cirrus Logic | 13 43 | 5 56 | | 6 88 | 6 94 | 0 91% | 29 30% |
| NYSE | CPQ | Compaq Comp | 51 25 | 22 93 | | 31 25 | 31 56 | 1 00% | 24 85% |
| NASD | CREAF | Creative Labs | 24 62 | 7 87 | 8 1 | 11.94 | 11.25 | 5 76% | -25.00% |
| NASD | DELL | Dell | 55.00 | 15 75 | 79.2 | 37 88 | 41.19 | 8.75% | 12 55% |
| NASD | DIMD | Diamond Multimedia | 15 50 | 2.87 | | 6 41 | 6.19 | -3.41% | 2.94% |
| NYSE | DIS | Disney | 42 75 | 22 50 | 38 4 | 32 94 | 31.50 | 4 36% | 5 00% |
| NASD | EIDSY | Eidos Interactive | 33 25 | 9 00 | 16 7 | 31 69 | 32 50 | 2 56% | 102 33% |
| NASD | ERTS | Electronic Arts | 57 12 | 33 25 | 45 2 | 49 06 | 47 88 | 2 42% | 14 70% |
| NASD | XPRT | Expert Software | 5 75 | 0 68 | | 2 16 | 2.06 | 4 35% | 1 54% |
| NASD | GTIS | GT Interactive | 11 50 | 3 56 | 15 4 | 4 25 | 4 47 | 5 15% | -10 63% |
| AMEX | HAS | Hasbro | 30 37 | 18 68 | 28 0 | 29 94 | 28 25 | -5 64% | 21 80% |
| NYSE | HWP | Hewett Packard | 83 87 | 47 06 | 24 0 | 68 69 | 67 88 | 1 18% | 0 64% |
| NYSE | IBM | IBM | 199 25 | 103 31 | 26 9 | 172 38 | 177 00 | 2 68% | 4 00% |
| NASD | INTC | Intel | 143 68 | 65 65 | 35 0 | 116 69 | 120.88 | 3 59% | 1 95% |
| NASD | IMGK | Interactive Magic | 14 75 | 3 50 | | 4 44 | 4.03 | -9.15% | 5 84% |
| NASD | INGR | Intergraph | 10 56 | 4 68 | | 6 50 | 6.50 | 0 00% | 13 04% |
| NASD | IPLY | Interplay | 8 20 | 1 00 | | 2 38 | 2 38 | 0 00% | 33 33% |
| NYSE | TLC | Learning Company Inc | 32 81 | 15 37 | | 28 88 | 28 06 | 2 81% | 7 42% |
| NASD | LOGIY | Logitech | 15 87 | 8 12 | 68 1 | 12 25 | 12 25 | 0 00% | 7 69% |
| NASD | MVSN | Macrovision | 46 75 | 17 50 | 47 5 | 31 75 | 35 13 | 10 63% | 16 86% |
| NYSE | MAT | Mattel Inc | 44 50 | 21 25 | 22 1 | 25 31 | 24 31 | 3 95% | 3 46% |
| NASD | MTWKF | Metrowerks Corporation | 8 00 | 2 25 | | 4 00 | 3 75 | 6 25% | -6 98% |
| NASD | MSFT | Microsoft | 94 62 | 40 93 | 79 2 | 89 06 | 92 69 | 4 07% | 33 66% |
| NYSE | MWY | Midway | 25 68 | 7 62 | 8 9 | 10 44 | 8 69 | 16 77% | 21 02% |
| NASD | PRAN | Piranha Interactive Publishing | 4 06 | 0 75 | 6 4 | 1 78 | 1 72 | 3 51% | 8 33% |
| NASD | RCOT | Recoton | 39 43 | 12 00 | 38 5 | 14 06 | 13 88 | 1 33% | 22 65% |
| NASD | EGAM | eGames Inc | 6 15 | 0 93 | 20 5 | 2 63 | 3 69 | 40 48% | 122 64% |
| NYSE | SII | S3 Inc | 9 43 | 1 53 | | 81 | 7 56 | 3 20% | 2 98% |
| NYSE | SNE | Sony Corp. | 100 75 | 60 25 | 23 8 | 94 38 | 95 88 | 1 59% | 33 16% |
| NASD | SSII | Sound Source Interactive Inc | 2 50 | 0 56 | | 0 88 | 0 84 | 3 57% | 8 00% |
| NASD | STBI | Sto Systems | 20 62 | 3 87 | | 06 | 8 31 | 17 70% | 24 30% |
| NASD | TTWO | Take Two | 13 62 | 4 75 | 19 0 | 7 88 | 8 19 | 3 97% | 0 76% |
| NASD | THQI | THQ | 32 12 | 9 50 | 14 6 | 19 19 | 20 13 | 4 89% | 28 13% |
| NASD | TMSR | ThrustMaster | 17 37 | 2 50 | | 12 88 | 16 25 | 26 21 | 1 56% |
| AMEX | VIA | Viacom | 42 62 | | | 42 17 | 42 25 | 0 52 | 14 87 |
| NASD | VOXW | Voxware Inc | 1 81 | 0 40 | | 9 | 0 69 | 29 03 | 29 03 |

## Retailers and Distributors

| EXCH | TICKER | COMPANY | 52-WEEK HIGH | 52-WEEK LOW | P/E RATIO | 3/26/99 CLOSE | 4/1/99 CLOSE | % CHANGE IN PERIOD | % CHANGE IN YEAR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NASD | AMZN | Amazon.Com Inc | 199 12 | 12 87 | | 139 06 | 171.00 | 22 97% | 59.69% |
| NASD | AMES | Ames Stores | 37 13 | 10 50 | 25 2 | 34 44 | 35.31 | 2 54% | 30 79% |
| NYSE | BKS | Barnes & Noble | 48 00 | 22 18 | 25 6 | 32 69 | 33.00 | 0.96% | -22 35% |
| NYSE | BBY | Best Buy | 55 68 | 14 87 | 57 1 | 49 88 | 51.38 | 3 01% | 67 41% |
| NASD | BYND | Beyond Com Corp | 41 31 | 6 18 | | 22.31 | 33.81 | 51 54% | 62 95% |
| NASD | CDNW | Cdnow Inc | 39 25 | 7 00 | | 18 63 | 16.00 | 14.09% | -11 11% |
| NYSE | CC | Circuit City | 78 37 | 28 81 | 63 1 | 71 38 | 75.06 | 5 17% | 50 31% |
| NYSE | CPU | Comp USA | 26 43 | 5 56 | | 5 88 | 6 75 | 14 89% | -48 33% |
| NASD | COOL | Cyberian Outpost Inc | 45 50 | 5 93 | | 20 50 | 18.81 | -8 23% | 31 59% |
| NASD | CYSP | Cybershop Intl Inc | 30 00 | 2 75 | | 13 13 | 15.00 | 14 29% | 31 87% |
| NASD | DRIV | Digital River Inc | 61.37 | 5.00 | | 35 38 | 44 88 | 26 86% | 26 41% |
| NASD | EBAY | eBay Inc | 177 37 | 8 43 | | 154 50 | 138 63 | 10 28% | 14.92% |
| NASD | EGGS | EggHead | 40 25 | 4 31 | | 19 06 | 17 81 | -6 56% | 14 41% |
| NASD | ELBO | Electronics Boutique | 25 75 | 6 62 | 12 6 | 14 38 | 14 00 | 2 61% | -31 29% |
| NYSE | FMY | Fred Meyer Inc. | 68 87 | 36 62 | 173 3 | 61 13 | 58 94 | -3 58% | -2 18% |
| NASD | FNCO | Funco Inc | 23 81 | 9 62 | 13 4 | 18 88 | 19 50 | 3 31% | 11 43% |
| NASD | GGUY | Good Guys | 15 75 | 2 68 | | 3 50 | 4 13 | 17 86% | 35.92% |
| NASD | MAL | MaI Inc | 32 75 | 5 50 | | 14 88 | 16 13 | 8 40% | 11 64% |
| NYSE | KM | K Mart Corp | 20 87 | 10 75 | 15 9 | 16 63 | 16 06 | 3 38% | 4 90% |
| NYSE | MAY | May Dept Stores | 47 25 | 33 18 | 16 9 | 37 44 | 39 06 | 4 34% | 2 95% |
| NASD | NAVR | Navarre | 27 00 | 2 18 | | 12 38 | 15.38 | 24.24% | 52 80% |
| NYSE | S | Sears | 65 00 | 39 06 | 16 3 | 45 63 | 44 69 | 2 05% | 5 15% |
| NYSE | SME | Service Merchandise | 2.37 | 0 12 | | 0 31 | 0 25 | 20 00% | -11 11% |
| NASD | SPLS | Staples | 34 00 | 14 62 | 81 9 | 32 69 | 33 56 | 2 68% | -23 18% |
| NYSE | TAN | Tandy | 64.81 | 37 00 | 120 0 | 60 44 | 64 81 | 7 24% | 57 36% |
| NASD | TOPS | Tops Appliance | 6.45 | 0 93 | | 1 38 | 1 50 | 9 09% | 46 67% |
| NYSE | TOY | Toys R Us | 30 8 | 13 62 | | 17 63 | 19 06 | 8 16% | 12 55% |
| NYSE | WMT | Wal-Mart | 98 37 | 48 18 | 47 1 | 91 56 | 93 25 | 1.84% | 14 50% |

*Source: Nordby International, Inc. (nordby.com), Boulder, CO. This information is based on sources believed to be reliable, and while extensive efforts are made to assure its accuracy, no guarantees can be made. Nordby International assumes no liability for any inaccuracies. For information on Nordby's customized financial research services, call 303.938.1877.*

## Index Comparisons




## Summary of Results

*Advances: 40 Declines: 30 Unchanged: 3*

| GAINERS | % CHANGE |
|---|---|
| Beyond.Com Corp | 51 54% |
| eGames Inc | 40 48% |
| Adrenalin Interactive Inc New | 34 00% |
| Digital River Inc. | 26 86% |
| ThrustMaster | 26.21% |

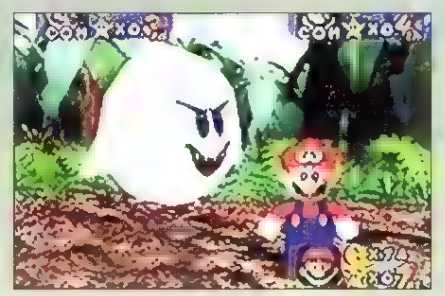
| LOSERS | % CHANGE |
|---|---|
| Voxware Inc | -29 03% |
| Service Merchandise | -20 00% |
| Midway | -16.77% |
| Cdnow Inc | -14.09% |
| eBay Inc | -10.28% |

| INDEX COMPARISONS | 03/26/99 | 4/1/99 | NET CHANGE | % CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| GameDaily Composite Index | 1949 24 | 2005 94 | 56 70 | 2.91 |
| GameDaily Publishers Index | 1880 74 | 1937 09 | 56 35 | 3.00 |
| GameDaily Retailers/Distributors | 2763 38 | 2835 57 | 72 20 | 2 61 |
| NASDAQ Composite | 2419.17 | 2493.37 | 74 20 | 3.07 |
| Dow Jones Industrial Average | 9822.24 | 9832 51 | 10.27 | 0.10 |
| S&P 500 Stock Index | 1282 80 | 1293 72 | 10 92 | 0 85 |
| Russell 2000 | 393 92 | 398 74 | 4.82 | 1 22 |

# Reader Information

## VIDTRAC'S Top 25 Renting Games

*For the week ending March 28, 1999*



| Rank | Platform | Title | Game Publisher | Street Date | Weekly Turns (000) | Weekly Revenue (000) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | N64 | Mario Party | Nintendo of America | Feb '99 | 94.56 | $308.87 |
| 2 | N64 | South Park | Acclaim Entertainment | Dec '98 | 65.72 | $212.57 |
| 3 | PSX | Silent Hill | Konami | Feb '99 | 67.60 | $211.01 |
| 4 | PSX | Syphon Filter | 989 Studios | Jan '99 | 64.78 | $205.03 |
| 5 | N64 | WCW/nWo Revenge | THQ Inc. | Aug '98 | 55.38 | $182.61 |
| 6 | N64 | Vigilante 8 | Activision | Mar '99 | 58.20 | $180.13 |
| 7 | PSX | WCW/nWo Thunder | THQ Inc. | Jan '99 | 49.11 | $163.73 |
| 8 | N64 | Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time | Nintendo of America | Nov '98 | 47.86 | $161.55 |
| 9 | PSX | Army Men 3D | 3DO Games | Mar '99 | 50.68 | $146.49 |
| 10 | N64 | Star Wars: Rogue Squadron | Nintendo of America | Dec '98 | 40.65 | $133.35 |
| 11 | N64 | GoldenEye 007 | Nintendo of America | Aug '97 | 41.48 | $128.22 |
| 12 | PSX | Metal Gear Solid | Konami | Oct '98 | 37.30 | $118.47 |
| 13 | N64 | WCW Nitro | THQ Inc. | Feb '99 | 35.53 | $113.43 |
| 14 | N64 | WWF: Warzone | Acclaim Entertainment | Jul '98 | 32.81 | $112.09 |
| 15 | N64 | Triple Play 2000 | EA Sports | Mar '99 | 35.63 | $111.99 |
| 16 | N64 | Battle Tanx | 3DO Games | Dec '98 | 34.59 | $108.24 |
| 17 | N64 | Castlevania | Konami | Jan '99 | 33.75 | $106.29 |
| 18 | N64 | Turok 2: Seeds of Evil | Acclaim Entertainment | Nov '98 | 31.66 | $105.51 |
| 19 | PSX | Rugrats | THQ Inc. | Nov '98 | 31.66 | $95.27 |
| 20 | N64 | Mario Kart | Nintendo of America | Feb '97 | 29.36 | $92.35 |
| 21 | PSX | Twisted Metal 3 | Sony Computer Entertainment | Nov '98 | 28.73 | $90.37 |
| 22 | N64 | NFL Blitz | Midway | Aug '98 | 27.06 | $86.85 |
| 23 | PSX | Crash Bandicoot 3 | Sony Computer Entertainment | Oct '98 | 27.79 | $86.55 |
| 24 | N64 | Cruis'n World | Nintendo of America | Aug '98 | 26.12 | $85.68 |
| 25 | N64 | Rush 2: Extreme Racing USA | Midway | Oct '98 | 25.50 | $82.70 |

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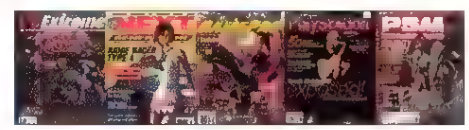

| Title | Publisher/System | Publication/Website | Review Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| Carmaggedon 2 | | | |
| Carpocalypse Now | Interplay, PC | PC Gamer | 85% |
| | | videogames.com | 7.8 / 10 |
| | | PC Accelerator | 7 / 10 |
| Silent Hill | Konami, PSX | PSM | 4.5 / 5 |
| | | videogames.com | 7.9 / 10 |
| | | Next Generation | 5 / 5 |
| Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri | Electronic Arts, PC | PC Gamer | 98% |
| | | ign PC | 9.5 / 10 |
| | | Next Generation | 5 / 5 |
| Civilization II | Activision, PSX | videogames.com | 7.9 / 10 |
| | | ign PSX | 8.8 / 10 |
| | | Next Generation | 5 / 5 |
| Global Domination | Psygnosis, PC | ign PC | 3.7 / 10 |
| | | GameSpot.com | 3.9 / 10 |
| | | PC Gamer | 30% |
| Vigilante 8 | Activision, N64 | Electronic Gaming Monthly | 8.5 / 10 |
| | | Nintendo Power | 7.9 / 10 |
| | | videogames.com | 7.9 / 10 |
| Mario Party | Nintendo, N64 | Electronic Gaming Monthly | 8.5 / 10 |
| | | ign 64 | 7.9 / 10 |
| | | videogames.com | 7.2 / 10 |
| SimCity 3000 | Maxis, PC | PC Games | B- |
| | | ign PC | 9 / 10 |
| | | GameSpot | 8.4 / 10 |

## Calendar of Events

### May

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**12-15** E³
Los Angeles, CA
e3expo.com

### August

**30- Sept. 2**
IEMA Exec.Summit
San Diego, CA
theiema.com

### September

**5-7** ECTS '99
London, Olympia
ects.com

**28** EB Show
Orlando, Florida
ebworld.com

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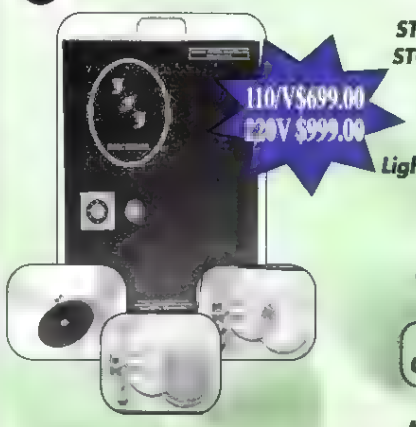


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# The Last Word:

# The Power behind Brand Licensing

*By Dan Hammett,*
*VP of Head Games Publishing*

It has been over three years since Head Games Publishing shipped its very first branded title. Since then, we have managed to carve out a niche for ourselves in a very competitive marketplace and attribute much of our success to smart branding. In addition to differentiating our products from similar titles in the marketplace, we believe branding has helped bring new consumers to the PC software industry. There is no doubt in our minds that placing familiar names on games has made the software aisle a more friendly experience for mass market computer owners.

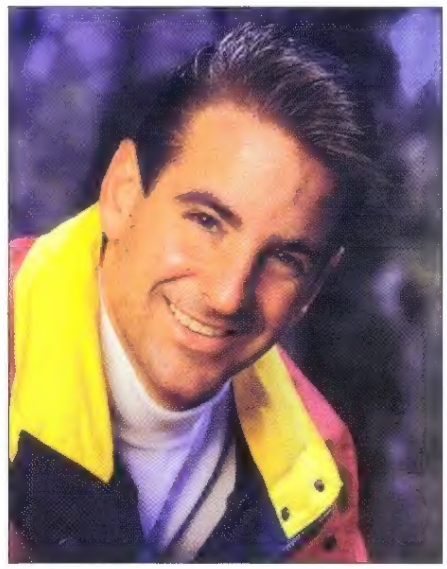
One of the advantages Head Games Publishing has is that our games appeal to a broad spectrum of consumers and, therefore, are a perfect fit for a variety of licenses. We make games based on popular outdoor and leisure activities, and have had the good fortune of aligning our titles with some of the most recognizable manufacturers in their respective industries.

Over the past several months, I've heard many people speculate about whether the formula of matching brand A with brand B will continue to equal success in the years to come. Our feeling is that in a turbulent industry like this one, there are no guarantees, but let's just say that with five titles in our Extreme series of PC games shipping to retailers in the next few weeks, we're betting on its continued success. We believe the market for branded, value-priced software is very strong and still growing.

A true testament to our philosophy is the popularity of our *Cabela's Big Game Hunter* franchise. Sales of the *Cabela's* games continue to be strong, and we expect the franchise to sell more than one million units before the release of *Cabela's Big Game Hunter III* later this fall. While the title's success has been partially driven by its low price point, the *Cabela's* name attracted a number of consumers who normally wouldn't play games. Additionally, major brands, like Cabela's, Remington, Brunswick Billiards and Zebco, have helped us secure retail shelf-space in areas that are not specifically dedicated to computer games.

While the licensing aspect of our business has been a key factor in our success, believe it or not, branding was not a part of the original plan my partner Chad Koehler and I had mapped out for Head Games. When we first started the company, our primary goal was to parlay our hobbies, which included skiing, hunting, fishing, playing pool, snow-mobiling, etc., into fun and realistic entertainment for the PC. We were huge fans of these activities and wanted to be able to give the mass market consumer, as well as enthusiasts, a chance to enjoy them from the comfort of their homes.

The idea to seek out licenses happened in the cold basement of my home in the midst of a sub-zero Minneapolis winter evening. Chad and I were shooting pool—I mean conducting research for our latest title—and discussing how realistic the pool tables were looking in our *Pro Pool* game. As I leaned over to take my shot, I found myself staring



***Dan Hammett***

at the "Brunswick" name on the pool table, and the wheels started to turn. It occurred to me at that moment that if we got our game in front of Brunswick Billiards, one of the best known brands in the pool industry, it would believe in our product enough to endorse it with its name.

It took some pavement pounding, but ultimately I was able to speak with and convince Brunswick that tying its name to our game was a win-win situation. After all, we were both trying to reach the same pool playing audience. Ultimately, this deal provided Brunswick with an additional avenue for reaching key consumers, and it gave us instant credibility. This first deal was a huge learning experience for me and served as a turning point in the course of our day-to-day business. From that moment forward, we have been in hot pursuit of major licenses for each of our life-style titles.

When pursuing a brand to license, there are many things a publisher should consider. First and foremost, they should choose a brand or licenses with guaranteed brand recognition in a particular category. For example, anyone who knows hunting knows Cabela's. It was a huge coup for us to tie that brand to our *Big Game Hunter* titles, and it has afforded us enormous cross-marketing opportunities that we otherwise would not have had. When we initially sat down with Cabela's to discuss licensing the brand, we found that the executives were very much on board with our goals. They got it! This is very important because once you sign a licensing agreement, every aspect of the product from development to quality control to retail merchandising is impacted.

We work very closely with each licensor to make sure that the final product is one that we are both proud to offer consumers. In addition, the licensor must be happy with the way their product is represented in the game. In other words, once you set up a licensing agreement, the power is no longer exclusively in your hands. There's a lot of give and take.

Along with the harmonious unions we have forged, we have also experienced some stumbling blocks that anyone seeking out a license should consider. Setting up these deals takes a lot of time and sometimes things just don't work out. For example, I was working out the licensing agreements for our recent *Extreme Rodeo* title, and one of my targets was Wrangler Jeans. Now I know that there is no hard correlation there, but for the sake of keeping my story short, let's assume this makes perfect sense to all of us—Jeans, Rodeo, a connection right!

So, over the course of about a month, I had built a great rapport with a wonderful contact at Wrangler. She seemed really happy with our proposal and everything was moving along nicely. And then, just when the final contract was about to be signed, and the Wrangler jeans were about to be thrown on the cowboys in our game, someone threw a hitch in our plans. It seems that Wrangler has two brands of jeans, some of which are not carried in many of the retailer locations where the game could be bought. So, in order not to confuse consumers, the company opted not to pursue the agreement.

Now this was not a do or die situation for us, but it does go to show you that hooking up with the right licensor is not as easy as it seems; it takes a lot of time to build relationships and even when a great relationship is forged, sometimes deals fall through.

Despite the ups and downs, I am more convinced than ever that branding is only going to become more important as additional products hit store shelves and sub $1000 PCs continue to bring new consumers to the marketplace. I feel that consumer's buying decisions will continue to be driven by brand recognition, especially those people who are new to buying entertainment software. As we near the new millennium and the competition heats up, Head Games Publishing is poised to continue delivering fun and innovative brand driven interactive entertainment to a rapidly growing mass-market audience. ***GW***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